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DRAGON®

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ISSUE NO. 385

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Where Do They Come From

Each month, *Dragon's* digital pages are filled with twelve to fifteen articles. They range in length from two pages to ten. They cover as wide a range of topics as we can cram into the space allotted. (While we don't worry about page count in digital space, we do worry about our budget and word count.)

Where do articles come from? How do we decide what makes an issue? Trevor Kidd, our community manager, has been poking me for months to write an editorial about these topics. "Chris, the people want to know our process!" he'll say. To which I reply, "Why? It's kind of boring."

But he's insistent and he has posts on the forums to support him, so I'm caving. If you're bored, blame Trevor.

It begins with the submissions inbox, submissions@wizards.com. If you have a great idea, if you spot some D&D topic that needs elaboration, or if you just want a new toy for your favorite character, this is where to start. Here are a few more tips:

- When you send us an email with your pitch, be interesting! We all think our ideas are fascinating—I'm no exception. Go a step further, and ask yourself whether your idea will be interesting to gamerdom at large. If you're playing a dhampyr shadar-kai hybrid rogue/cleric who specializes in using the khopesh, that's awesome. If you pitch us new khopesh feats for dhampyr shadar-kai hybrid rogue/clerics, you'll have a hard time making the case. That article might be super great for your character, but you might be the only one playing that combo. (Scratch that—that sounds cool enough to be my next character. The point still stands.) It's also always a good idea to hone your ideas with friends or the regulars at the local game store.
- Once you have a solid idea, work up that email. Put the magazine you're targeting in the subject line (*Dragon* runs player content, *Dungeon* runs DM content). Include the name of the article series that your pitch is intended for, if any. For example, if you're writing a Class Acts: Fighter article for *Dragon*, the subject line should convey that information. It's okay to send multiple proposals in a single email; note the number of pitches in the subject line as well. A strong subject line helps us pluck your email from the swarm.
- Describe your article as concisely and clearly as possible. A pitch is not a full article or even an outline. A few hundred words (300 or fewer) should suffice. If it doesn't, you're explaining too much or your idea is too complicated.
- Have a friend proofread your email before hitting send. You're sending a resume to a potential employer who's hiring writers; typos and unclear language hurt your chances.

Once your pitch hits our inbox, we'll read it and decide yes, no . . . or maybe. If we're not interested, you won't hear from us. Like most large publishers, we get too many proposals to send even form rejections. If we're interested, you'll get an email asking for an outline, along with requests for changes, within sixty days. In the case of a maybe, you might not hear from us for longer than our normal sixty-day waiting period, but then you'll get an email out of the blue. This is because we flagged your pitch as interesting but not something we can use in the next several months (usually because it's related to an unreleased or even unannounced product).

Once we contact you, we'll go back and forth over several drafts of the outline, hammering out the minutiae. There will be some paperwork at this stage, including a confidentiality agreement and a contract. The contract will include a deadline, and we expect you to hit it. As with the outline, expect to be asked for several revisions on your article. Once it gets the green light, you'll get paid and the article will see the light of day, to be thoughtfully and considerately critiqued by your fellow members of the online community. Ahem.

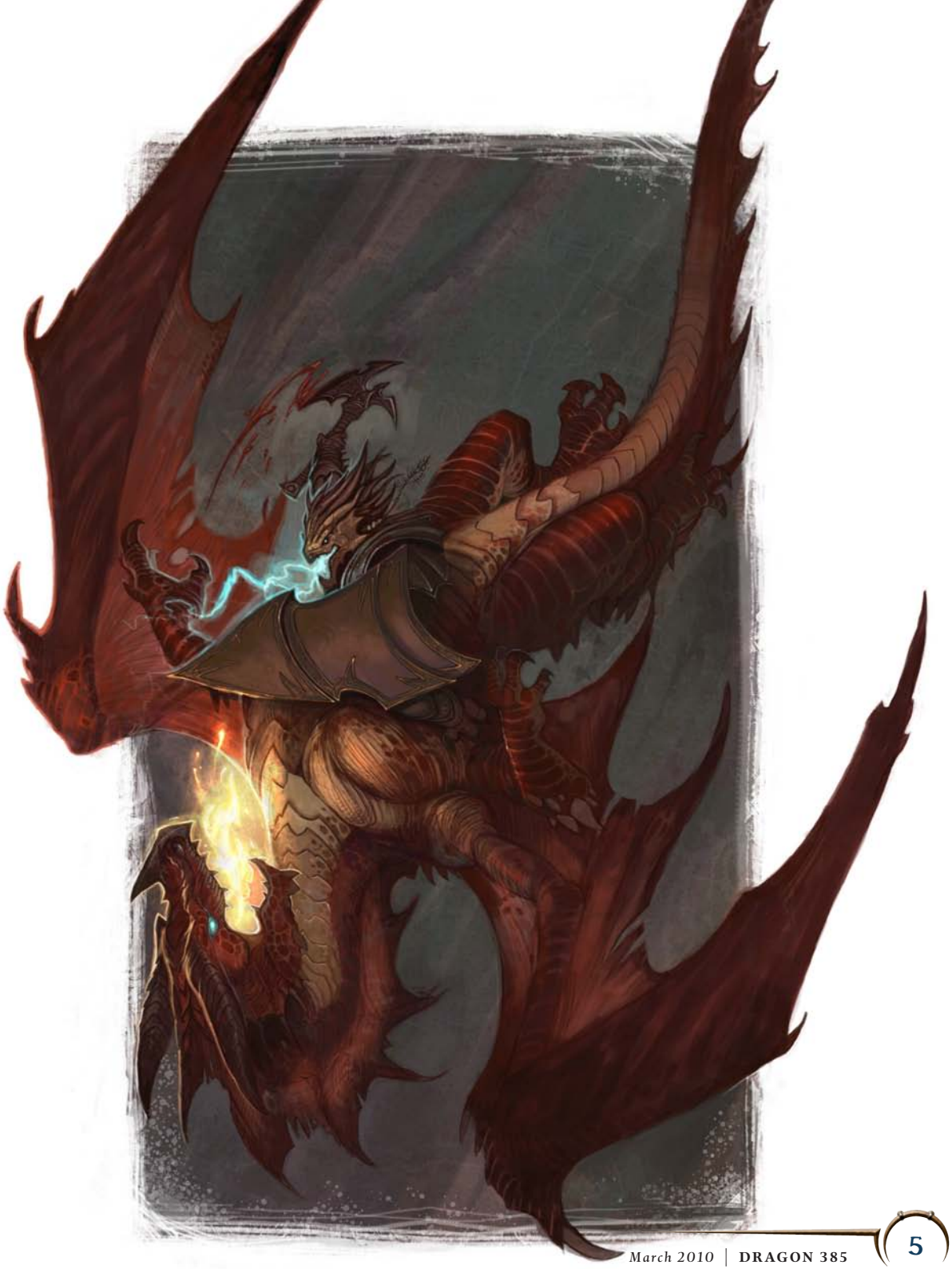
All in all, it's a simple process. I hope you're all inspired to send us some fresh pitches. Our content is for you, by you—fan contributions are what make these magazines so fantastic. Stay tuned to the *D&D Insider* and Dungeons & Dragons community pages, because we're going to post requests for specific topics there. But if you have a great idea that's all yours, don't be shy about suggesting it. We can't print what we don't receive.

Above all, if we don't reply to your submission, don't get discouraged. Keep sending, keep writing, and keep playing!

Power of Dragons

By Greg Tito
Illustration by William O'Connor

They say all dragonborn carry the innate power of their larger cousins. Some have learned to access the power that resides in their draconic blood more completely than others. They devote themselves to a cause or join organizations that teach the secrets of unlocking a draconic ancestry. These groups sometimes align themselves with any variety of dragons, but metallic dragons in particular are more interested in the affairs of their more humanoid brethren. Copper or silver, mercury or adamantine, all empowered like-minded dragonborn. Rumors hint that the mithral dragons of the Astral Sea grant dragonborn and other mortal races alike the ability to commune with them to do their will. The following five paragon paths let your character tap into the power of dragons.



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Argentum Alliance

"By the honor of Sephitherax, you oppress these people no more!"

Prerequisite: Dragonborn

High atop the mountains in Hoar Frost Castle, the mighty Sephitherax trains an elite corps of dragonborn so that they can defend the innocent. Honorable and decent people respect the Argentum Alliance, and the unscrupulous and corrupt fear it. All flights of chromatic dragons dread the justice of the Alliance, but the white dragons especially seek the destruction of Hoar Frost Castle. Backed by the power of the ancient silver dragon Sephitherax, the Alliance can help people overthrow evil despots or theocrats. They are the first to respond to volcanic eruptions or floods to maintain order and defend people from those who might prey upon weakness. An Argentum Agent is a savior and a welcome sight to the impoverished.

Many a fierce dragonborn, inspired by the tales of the bravery of the Alliance, makes his or her way to the summit of the tallest mountain to Hoar Frost Castle, where each expects to be judged by Sephitherax. In the bailey yard of the castle, with thick ice encrusting the flags and silverwork, each dragonborn kneels before the hundred steps before the citadel.

The ancient silver questions each supplicant. When Sephitherax raises his left claw, the candidate is banished from Hoar Frost Castle immediately. When the wise old dragon raises his right claw, the supplicant might one day become an Argentum Agent, but that day is not today. He or she is given a hot meal and sent down the mountain with the expectation that he or she will perform worthy tasks before returning to the Castle one year hence to be judged again. If the candidate is worthy, Sephitherax pronounces him or her an Argentum Agent by raising both claws and embracing the dragonborn. Rarely is a dragonborn raised the first time he or she is presented to Sephitherax; many are judged two or three times before Sephitherax declares the supplicant an Argentum Agent.

Brothers train at Hoar Frost Castle, and they learn to harness the frigid winds from Sephitherax. The color of the scales of an Argentum Agent fade over time and are replaced with a metallic gleam. None are sure if this transformation is due to the icy conditions or the proximity and blessing of the Heart of Sephitherax, an amulet artifact bestowed to the ancient silver by Bahamut.

Argentum Agent Path Features

Argent Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to make an attack, you mark each enemy within 5 squares of you until the end of your next turn.

Argent Breath (11th level): Your *dragon breath* racial power deals cold damage in addition to any damage type it dealt previously. Also, when you hit a creature with *dragon breath*, the target takes 1d6 extra damage (2d6 extra at 21st level) and is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Argent Protection (16th level): You gain resist cold equal to 10 + half your level.

Argentum Agent Powers

Argent Judgment — Argentum Agent Attack 11

With a vicious attack, the frost on your scales and weapon freezes your opponent in places and locks its wrath upon you.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier cold damage, and the target is restrained until the end of your next turn.

Defend the Fallen — Argentum Agent Utility 12

The cries of your ally call your attention and you rush to defend him or her.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: An ally within 10 squares of you falls prone or becomes unconscious
Effect: You move twice your speed to a square adjacent to the fallen ally. Both you and the ally gain a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn.

Breath of Sephitherax — Argentum Agent Attack 20

You inhale deeply and blow out a frigid breath that turns the very bones of your enemies to ice.

Daily ✦ Cold
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each enemy in blast
Attack: Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 4d6 + Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity modifier cold damage, and the target is restrained (save ends).
Aftereffect: The target is slowed (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is restrained until the end of your next turn.

Mercurial Assassin

"I can be in many places at once, or right behind you, pretending to be your best friend."

Prerequisite: Dragonborn, trained in Bluff or Stealth

The House of Methys has always had a strong connection to quicksilver. As the story goes, the family fortune was forged from a source of mercury discovered in one of their iron mines, with the wizards and alchemists of the realm paying handsomely for the rare liquid metal. At some point, though, rumors spread that by digging for more mercury, the House of Methys awoke something powerful in the deeps. Then, the rumors abruptly stopped, possibly because anyone heard prying into the details about the noble house died soon after.

What most folk don't know is that a clan of twelve mercury dragons served as the source of the Methys fortune. The merchant house drained them of some of their blood, which can be transformed through ritual magic to pure mercury, and then sold the metal to the highest bidder. At first, these mercury dragons were amused that humans would pay so handsomely for their blood, and their hoards grew at the cost of a minute or two of pain. But when they learned that Methys agents had stolen a clutch of a mercury dragon's eggs to harvest for the precious liquid metal, they realized the scope of the Methys family's hunger for power. These twelve mercury dragons, maddened with grief, turned on their business partners and slaughtered the leaders, then used their polymorph ability to assume their identities. Now the Methys dragons have made it their mission to reacquire all of the mercury that came from the dragon eggs by tracking down the sales of the blood using the spotty records the Methys agents kept, plus ensure that knowledge of the ritual used to transform their blood is erased from the world. They have vowed to never again allow another agency to profit from their own blood.

To help them in this endeavor, they turned to group of dragonborn agents, gathered one by one. Soon after the original members of House Methys were dispatched, the twelve dragons discovered that by infusing their blood into that of a dragonborn, through a painful ritual colloquially called the Infusion, the dragonborn gained some abilities that benefited them in their pursuit of their masters' goal. The mercurial assassins, as these dragonborn are known, are then sent out to hunt down every drop of mercury created from the foul ritual and bring it back to House Methys. They are also charged with tracking down any copies of the ritual that might exist. Assassinating those individuals who have some portion of the mercury isn't a primary objective, but it isn't exactly frowned upon either. The mercurial assassin is rewarded no matter the circumstances.

Mercurial Assassin Path Features

Mercurial Agility (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can also take a move action.

Quicksilver Movement (11th level): You gain a +1 bonus to speed and a +3 bonus to Stealth checks.

Fluid Shape (16th level): When an enemy makes an opportunity attack against you, the enemy must roll twice and use the lower result.

Fluid Counterattack Mercurial Assassin Attack 11

You become liquid metal and move to the other side of your attacker, striking it before it has time to discover your whereabouts.

Encounter ✦ Polymorph, Weapon
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** weapon
Trigger: An enemy makes a melee attack against you
Effect: You shift 3 squares to a square adjacent to the triggering enemy.
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

Mercurial Disguise Mercurial Assassin Utility 12

Your form ripples as if it were water disturbed by a stone, and your appearance changes.

At-Will ✦ Illusion, Polymorph
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You can assume the form of any Medium humanoid, and you disguise your clothing and equipment to reflect this change. You retain your statistics in your new form. The new form lasts until you change form again.

Any creature that attempts to see through your ruse makes an Insight check opposed by your Bluff check, and you gain a +5 bonus to your check.

Streaking Mercury Mercurial Assassin Attack 20

Your weapon drips with quicksilver, and you attack the foe in front of you, moving swiftly to the next target, throwing the poisonous metal into its eyes.

Daily ✦ Poison, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Dexterity modifier poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You can shift your speed and make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: One creature other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Secondary Hit: 3[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target cannot see you (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.

Adamant Instructor

"It is my destiny to unite the Great Teacher's peoples once again."

Prerequisite: Dragonborn, any divine class

The Great Teacher was revered by all the peoples of his underground realm. The ancient adamantine dragon's influence didn't spread into the land of sun and wind, but in the rock, ore, and fungus of the Underdark, his benevolence erected an island of good under the earth. Long ago, the Great Teacher rescued a group of dragonborn that that were beset by denizens of the Underdark, and instead of returning to the surface, these dragonborn devoted themselves to the Adamantine. They became his Adamant Instructors and together they forged a noble nation around the Great Teacher's hoard in the cavern complex they called Adamanth. The dragonborn prospered under the Teacher's guidance, and Adamanth became a haven for all that was good and strong. Even some drow and duergar were drawn by the Great Teacher's benevolence to renounce their darker ways and live in peace under the rule of the Adamant Instructors.

Then one day the Great Teacher departed Adamanth to deal with a nasty group of purple dragons that were slaughtering his people on the borders of his influence. He never returned. For decades, the Adamant Instructors have followed the Great Teacher's instructions, which were carved on a disk of solid adamantine in flowing draconic script by the ancient dragon before he departed. But the Adamant Instructors are hard-pressed to keep hope alive in Adamanth. Purple worms continue to assail them, the drow are assembling an army, and rumors say that mind flayers are stirring in the deep caves to the west. In the absence of the Great Teacher, it is up to the Adamant Instructors to lead the adamantine dragon's people through these dark times.

Adamant Instructor Path Features

Instructed Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you and each ally within 5 squares of you gain a +2 power bonus to the next attack roll made before the end of your next turn.

Thunderous Teachings (11th level): Your *dragon breath* racial power deals thunder damage in addition to any damage type it might have dealt previously. In addition, when you hit a creature with *dragon breath*, the target takes 1d6 extra damage (2d6 extra at 21st level) and you can push the target 1 square.

Insightful Negotiator (16th level): You gain a +3 bonus to Insight checks. In addition, you can make an Insight check in place of any Diplomacy check.

Adamantine Blast Adamant Instructor Attack 11

You rear back your scaled head and let loose a mighty roar, distracting all those in your path.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Thunder
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Charisma or Wisdom + 6 vs. Reflex
Level 21: Charisma or Wisdom + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Wisdom modifier thunder damage, and the target grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Great Speech Adamant Instructor Utility 12

An inspired speech escapes your scaled lips, inspiring your allies with words reminiscent of the Great Teacher's instructions.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Target: You and each ally in burst
Effect: The target gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of the encounter.

Demand Fealty Adamant Instructor Attack 20

You beckon toward the enemy and impress the will of the Great Teacher upon him.

Daily ✦ Charm, Divine, Implement, Psychic, Thunder
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 1d10 + Wisdom or Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target is dominated and takes ongoing 5 thunder damage (save ends both).
Miss: 1d10 + Wisdom or Charisma modifier psychic damage, and target is dazed and takes ongoing 5 thunder damage (save ends both).

Glee-Born

"Never underestimate the value of a well-timed jest."

Prerequisite: Dragonborn, any arcane class

Dragonborn can be a harsh and taciturn race. When a dragonborn becomes known for excessive jesting or practical jokes, he or she is shunned and called glee-born or "touched by copper." Rather than accept scorn, glee-born embrace their fun-loving nature and welcome the title with pride, even if they are forced into exile away from dragonborn lands. Luckily, many human kings welcome glee-born into their courts as jesters or courtesans.

Glee-born are quick to laugh, but they can be dangerous in battle. A sly word or cutting insult can easily distract a foe, and glee-born are known to have arcane talents that they use liberally in combat.

Only true copper dragons could match the sly wit of a glee-born, and many scholars posit that the glee-born must have coppers in their lineage. Indeed, the scales of older glee-born have been known to develop an orange hue and even a green verdigris tinge late in life. If they live long enough, that is.

Glee-Born Path Features

Insulting Action (11th level): When you miss a target that grants combat advantage to you, you can spend an action point to reroll that attack roll with a +2 bonus. You must use the result of the second roll.

Glib Tongue (11th level): You gain a +3 bonus to Bluff checks and Diplomacy checks.

Captive Audience (16th level): When you hit a creature with an arcane attack, each enemy adjacent to the target grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Flip and Blast — Glee-Born Attack 11

Arcane force washes outward from you . . . but you aren't there anymore.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each creature in burst
Effect: Before or after the attack, you can shift half your speed.
Attack: Intelligence or Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence or Charisma modifier force damage, and the target takes a –2 penalty to its next attack roll before the end of your next turn.

Revealing Feint — Glee-Born Utility 12

You fake left and dance right, taking away your attacker's advantage.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, you do not grant combat advantage for any reason.

Set a Riddle — Glee-Born Attack 20

You confuse your opponent with quick words and a charming smile.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 20
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence or Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Mithral Arm

"My patron bathes in the Astral Sea, I am here to keep his interests in the Material."

Prerequisite: Dragonborn

Some mithral dragons are content to spend their lives in the Astral Sea, having no connection to the world or the business of mortal creatures. That is not true of the Mithral Pentad, a band of five mithral dragons who believe it is Io's will to rid the world of the tyranny wrought by their chromatic brethren. The Pentad seeks to eradicate any nation controlled by evil dragons, but they also strive to wipe out individual chromatics and their hoards to prevent any future injustice. Rarely, a metallic dragon might have vile plans that indicate its evil, but the Pentad seeks to convert them to the will of Io before killing them outright. If they refused to be turned, however, then the life of a copper or a mercury dragon is as forfeit as a red or black.

Although the five ancients of the Pentad are powerful, they cannot be in all places at once, and they seldom exhibit their full might on the battlefield. They have established an order of mortals to seek out and destroy lesser drakes, or band together an army to assault heavily fortified fortresses or even nations. This organization is called the Mithral Arms, because they labor to accomplish the will of the Pentad, and each member is infused with the power of their patrons. Riches, power, and influence mean nothing to a Mithral Arm, unless such means can directly aid the destruction of evil chromatic dragons. Woe to all who stand in the Mithral Arms' way, because they carry the power of the Pentad with them.

Mithral Arm Path Features

Astral Knowledge (11th level): You gain an encounter attack power of 7th level or lower from your class. You cannot choose a power that you already know. At 21st level, you can replace this power with an encounter attack power of 13th level or lower from your class.

Astral Luck (11th level): When your first attack roll with an attack power is a natural 20, you regain hit points equal to your level.

Prophetic Foresight (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

Astral Step (16th level): You gain teleport 2 as an additional movement mode.

Commune with the Pentad (16th level): Once each day during a short rest, you can commune with one of the Mithral Pentad. Make an Arcana, Nature, or Religion check. Divide the result of the check by 10 (round down). This determines the number of questions you can ask the dragon. The dragon answers yes or no questions only, and the dragon might withhold answers if the question has no bearing on the eradication of evil dragons. A question that results in no answer still counts against the total number available.

Prophetic Defense — **Mithral Arm Utility 12**

You see your opponent's attack before it happens and twist away.

Encounter ✦ Teleport
Immediate Interrupt — **Personal**
Trigger: You are hit by an attack
Effect: You gain a +4 bonus to all defenses against the triggering attack. If the attack misses, you can teleport 6 squares.

Dimension Strike — **Mithral Arm Attack 20**

You ride the waves of the Astral Sea to your opponent and away to safety.

Daily ✦ Teleport
Standard Action — **Personal**
Effect: You teleport 5 squares and use one of your encounter attack powers. You can use a power you have already expended this encounter, and using it does not expend it. The attack deals +1d10 damage and deals half damage on a miss. After the attack resolves, you can teleport 5 squares.

About the Author

Greg Tito is a freelance game journalist, playwright, and theater producer, who also happens to play D&D in his spare time. This is his first article for *Dragon* magazine.

Power of the Mind: The Kalashtar

By Keith Baker

Illustration by Tyler Jacobson, Zoltan Boros & Gabor Szikszai

She might have been an angel, fallen from Syrania to land on the streets of Sharn. Any sculptor would sell his soul to capture her features in stone. But Callestan was no place for an angel, and Norger had defaced many a statue in his day.

Norger struck as she passed the mouth of the alley, pulling her into the shadows. He pinned her with one rough motion, the point of his knife bringing a spot of blood to her snow-white skin. "Give me what I want, and you just might live," he whispered.

Norger knew what to expect. He was ready to choke off a scream, to contain her struggles. But she didn't fight or cry out. She just looked into his eyes.

And he felt a hand on his knee.

It was a boy, and his face was as familiar to Norger as his own reflection. He still saw it in his nightmares. Jayden. His first victim.

"I've been waiting," the boy whispered. "Will you play with me?" He opened his mouth impossibly wide, and Norger could see dozens of teeth gleaming in the light of the coldfire lanterns.

The ruffian screamed, and his dagger clattered on the cobblestones. The kalashtar woman watched the nightmare do its work, and the hint of a smile touched her perfect lips.

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Naturally telepathic, the kalashtar are often associated with psionic abilities. As a result, it's easy to overlook the potential of the kalashtar race and the diverse range of character ideas it supports. The kalashtar aren't simply psychic. They are bound to renegade spirits driven from the plane of dreams. They are tied to a legacy of dream and nightmare, and a struggle to shift the soul of the world itself.

Kalashtar Origins: Fallen Nightmares

The story of the kalashtar begins on another plane of existence: Dal Quor, the region of dreams. Dal Quor is a mutable realm. When mortal creatures dream, their spirits fall into Dal Quor and create bubbles on the fringes of the plane—pockets formed by their hopes and fears.

Dal Quor isn't entirely shaped by the thoughts of mortals. The heart of the realm has its own guiding spirit—a potent force that is known only through the world it creates. This is the dream of the age, and the current dream is a nightmare. The kalashtar call it *il-Lashtavar*, or "the great darkness that dreams." This mighty force has spawned a host of children, dark spirits known as quori. These fiends feed on the emotions of mortals, and dreams are their hunting grounds. For thousands of years the quori wandered the edges of Dal Quor, shaping mortal dreams to suit their purposes.

Even among immortals, the possibility of change and evolution exists. An angel can fall from grace . . . and a fiend can rise. A handful of quori found their desires at odds with the will of il-Lashtavar. They tired of spreading nightmares among the mortals. They found evidence that the heart of Dal Quor was not always as it was today—that it might become a bastion of light and bright dreams. Led by a spirit named Taratai, these dreamers sought to change their world. They were hunted across Dal Quor and were on the verge of annihilation when Taratai found a way to escape—by slipping out of Dal Quor and into the mortal world to merge with human hosts. A band of Adaran monks bonded with the rebel quori, and this was the birth of the kalashtar race.

Shattered Dreams

A member of another race finds it difficult to understand the bond between a kalashtar and its quori spirit. The quori is not an active presence in the mind of a kalashtar. The kalashtar cannot carry on a conversation with the spirit. But the spirit is a part of the kalashtar that touches its mind from the moment of conception. When a kalashtar sleeps, he or she does not dream; instead, he or she dwells in the memories of the quori spirit. The quori spirit gathered these experiences over the course of thousands of years in the Region of Dreams. Being exposed to these memories is one reason the kalashtar mature at such a remarkable rate; by the time a kalashtar is born, it has already inherited instincts and memories of the quori spirit. The spirit isn't an active voice in the child's head, but it is a defining aspect of his or her personality. One result of this is that two kalashtar children tied to the same spirit seem very similar at a young age. As they grow older, their human consciousness grows, and they each develop a unique identity as a being balanced between two worlds.

The existence of this bond has a number of obvious effects on kalashtar culture. Telepathy is deeply engrained in their society. A kalashtar child telepathically communicates with its mother while still in the womb, and they socialize telepathically long before they learn to speak out loud. Most kalashtar use telepathy any time they are making a comment directed at an individual, and they speak only if what they are saying needs to be heard by multiple people at once. While kalashtar can use telepathy to convey words, they often use it to convey pure emotion; kalashtar art and poetry are telepathic constructs based around interwoven memories and emotions.

Kalashtar Children

Kalashtar can breed and reproduce with humans, changelings, half-elves, and half-orcs. The race of the child is based on gender. If it is the same gender as the kalashtar parent, the child is a kalashtar of the same spiritual lineage as the kalashtar parent. Otherwise, it inherits the race of the nonkalashtar parent. This means that all kalashtar of a particular spiritual lineage share the same gender; all Ashtai kalashtar are female, and all Hareth kalashtar are male.

Kalashtar children mature at a rate that members of other races often find disturbing. In a kalashtar community, children are taught meditative and telepathic exercises before they can walk, and they begin the basics of martial training as soon as they have the coordination. A kalashtar child born into another culture might be confused and frustrated by the imbalance between his or her physical and mental development. If a player is interested in playing a young kalashtar, he or she could have the same statistics but simply be size Small (with the appropriate weapon size restrictions for Small characters).

Another side effect is that kalashtar have memories of an unreal world—a world in which the physical and magical laws of reality do not apply. As a result, young kalashtar might suggest courses of action that are simply impossible in real life: planting coins in the ground to grow silver trees, or singing a dragon to sleep. In Dal Quor, these things are perfectly possible—and the young kalashtar has to learn what is and isn't real.

Spiritual Lineage and Quori Roots

Sixty-seven quori fled to Eberron, and sixty-seven monks offered their bodies and minds as havens for these renegade spirits. Every kalashtar is descended from one of these monks and bound to one of these spirits. This is reflected in the suffix attached to a kalashtar name; Lanhareth and Minhareth are both part of the spiritual lineage of Hareth. When creating a kalashtar player characters, a player should also take a moment to develop a spiritual lineage—the blend of quori and mortal that defines the kalashtar.

Begin with the quori. Determine its name and its nature. You can choose from many different types of quori, each tied to certain emotions and aspects of the psyche.

- ✦ The **tsucora** quori are fearmongers who feed on mortal terror.
- ✦ **Hashalaq** quori specialize in deception and seduction, and they manipulate their prey with pleasure and positive emotions.
- ✦ The **duulora** are spirits of fury and aggression, who inspire feuds and acts of vengeance.

While these are the most common quori, many more can exist. A player character could be tied to a spirit of doubt or jealousy. The kalashtar quori have turned against their dark nature, but those roots remain, and, as a kalashtar character, a player should decide how to reflect the darkness in his or her character.

Consider the duulora, spirits of anger. The duulora Vakri has turned against its inner fury, and the kalashtar of its line use monastic discipline to control anger. The kalashtar of the Karshana line fight for the light, but revel in the sheer joy of battle; a character of this line might be an ardent or a thaneborn barbarian. The duulora Tarkhad uses fury as a weapon, and the kalashtar of his line are often bards who taunt foes and drive them into irrational rages. Kalashtar with tsucora roots are comfortable with terror, but this could translate into a shaman who physically manifests fears; an ardent who disorients foes with implanted fear; or a paladin who seeks to use his or her own knowledge of terror to banish it from those around him or her.

Having considered the nature of the quori spirit, look to the mortal side. While they aren't physically identical, kalashtar of the same spiritual lineage are often similar in both appearance and mannerisms. What stands out? When a character meets another kalashtar of his or her lineage, what does they discover that they have in common?

Putting all of this together, consider the line of Lurashtai. She began her existence as a tsucora quori. She wove dreams of gothic horror, often playing on fear of death or the undead. In her path to the light, she has taken a particular interest in the undead, believing these spirits trapped outside the cycle of life and dream weaken the shared soul of the age. The kalashtar of her line typically have rosy skin, sharp features, and silky, dark hair; they tend to dress in multiple shades of red. Raised on Lurashtai's morbid dreams, they are comfortable with tragedy and have no fear of death; they often find beauty in things others consider disturbing or depressing. Most of the Lurashtai line feel an urge to follow divine paths, specializing in the destruction of undead.

History and Culture

Having developed the history of a line and the spirit that's shaped a character from within it, a player should think about the circumstances the character has faced in his or her waking life. This is not the same as a character background. The character could be a mental bastion, a deserter, or an inquisitive regardless of whether he or she comes from Adar or Sharn.

A kalashtar raised in an Adaran monastery is likely to be well-versed in the history of the race and the quori spirit. Odds are good that he or she has clashed with Riedran forces and might have even fought one of the Inspired. Almost all Adaran kalashtar follow the tenets of the Path of Light and are concerned with the threat of the Dreaming Dark. Growing up, the character will have spent most of his or her time with other kalashtar and uses telepathic communication frequently and casually.

A character raised in one of the kalashtar communities in Khorvaire likely knows the name and nature of his or her quori spirit and the general history of his or her people. However, he or she has also mingled with members of other races and learned about their customs and faiths, and might not follow the Path of Light. While the Dreaming Dark remains a threat, it is nebulous and subtle, using local pawns and dream manipulation instead of Riedran soldiers and Inspired assassins. Lightwalkers of Khorvaire are often more aggressive than their cousins, but they

pursue darkness in all its forms. A kalashtar of Khorvaire might hunt the Dreaming Dark, but could just as easily commit his or life to destroying the Lords of Dust, battling the Cults of the Dragon Below, or fighting unjust landlords and gangsters preying on Cyran refugees in the aftermath of the Last War. Most fight to create a better world, but many ways to bring light to dark places exist.

And then some kalashtar grow up without contact with their own kind. Perhaps the character is a lone survivor of a community destroyed in the Last War. Maybe his or her mother was a kalashtar adventurer who died shortly after he or she was born, leaving him her in the care of a human father. If this is the case, the character's knowledge of kalashtar culture is entirely instinctual, drawn from the dreams of the quori spirit. He or she might not know the name of the quori spirit, or even understand that he or she is connected to a quori. The character might be drawn to fight for the cause of good, but has probably never heard of the Dreaming Dark. He or she might be uncomfortable with telepathic communication, preferring to speak aloud. On his or her own, the character might know nothing about the Path of Light; he or she could follow a different religious path, or no faith at all.

Regardless of upbringing, the instinctive bond to the quori spirit pushes kalashtar characters to battle the darkness and champion the cause of light. But a kalashtar character can always ignore this voice. He or she might have chosen the life of a mercenary in the Last War. The character could use powers for personal gain as a con artist in Sharn. Kalashtar who clash with quori instincts in this way are typically manic or mentally unstable; a player who decides to play an amoral or evil kalashtar should consider ways to represent this internal struggle as he or she plays the character.

Class and Background: Paths of Light

Kalashtar are touched by dreams and nightmares. They are warriors of the light battling against the darkness of the human soul. They are telepathic by nature, but this is based on their connection to Dal Quor—a realm that touches mortal minds on a fundamental level. Kalashtar are well suited to many psionic classes, and their natural telepathy suggests this path. But the flavor normally associated with a class is just that: flavor. As long as the mechanics remain intact, flavor can be changed. The shaman is a primal class, but at its core, it is a class based around interacting with spirits. In the long run, it makes little difference if these spirits are tied to the natural world or the world of dreams.

The following backgrounds examine different paths kalashtar can take in the world. Although aimed at specific types of characters, most can be taken by any kalashtar character.

Servant of the Light: The renegade quori were driven from Dal Quor because of their faith in the Path of Light, and their belief that the Darkness That Dreams can be replaced by il-Yannah, the Great Light. This faith continues to drive you to this day. If you are a Duulora avenger, you strike with righteous fury borne from your faith, and if you are a hashalaq cleric or paladin, you use charisma and diplomacy to inspire mortals to turn away from darkness. When it comes to battle, psychic power and the radiant force of il-Yannah combine within you to make you a fearsome foe. How can you reflect both aspects of your culture? Are you a kalashtar ardent who falls upon training as a

Kalashtar, Sleep, and Dreams

Kalashtar are similar to humans in most respects. In particular, a kalashtar requires 6 hours of sleep to benefit from an extended rest. However, kalashtar do not dream as most other creatures do. For most mortals, dreams are the result of psychic contact with Dal Quor. To protect their quori spirits, the kalashtar are psychically isolated from Dal Quor. While sleeping, a kalashtar has visions drawn from his or her own experiences and from the memories of his or her quori spirit. However, since the sleeping kalashtar never touches the Region of Dreams, it cannot be targeted by rituals or other effects that affect only dreaming characters.

In the present day, each of the founding spirits is spread over hundreds of kalashtar; while a founding spirit is aware of all of its children, it is a distant patron. However, one or more of the founding spirits could be roused to greater action. Although the quori has no way to directly affect the physical world, it could advise a sleeping kalashtar through dreams. It could also relay messages to other kalashtar of the same lineage in their dreams, allowing a group of kalashtar to coordinate an operation over vast distances. Such a spirit could serve as a patron for a kalashtar character. Alternatively, when a kalashtar nonplayer character joins a cult of the Dragon Below, this corruption could spread through the founding spirit and into all of the kalashtar of the lineage, creating a cult of killers spread across the world. If this is the character's line, can he or she find a way to resist the corruption and heal the spirit bound to his or her soul?

paladin to reflect your faith? Or have you recently discovered the need to find and destroy those who oppose the light?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Religion

Associated Languages: Quori

Quori Nightmare: Although she does not dream, the quori nightmare can touch the dreams of others. She hears the whispers of your hopes and fears, and she can pluck terrors from your unconscious mind and turn them into deadly reality. Many quori nightmares are shamans, but you might have chosen the path of the assassin, and you combine your skills as an assassin with the power to craft nightmares. As you go about your work, you might be a grim figure even as you strike fear into the hearts of evildoers. If you chose to become a druid, you might draw your wild shape from the nightmares of others, becoming a beast never seen in reality—or even a shadow of your quori spirit. How does this make you feel, though? Do you revel in the sense of fear you instill in others, or do you see it as another tool in your arsenal of abilities?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Insight

Mythspeaker: Dal Quor is the region of dreams, and it holds other spirits beyond the quori. Here stories come to die and legends loved by the living can find a permanent resting place. These are the vestiges the mythspeaker deals with—echoes of great heroes both real and fictional, whose tales live on in the world of dreams. As a mythspeaker, you are an ambassador between reality and the world of stories; you draw your strength from legends, and many might want you to bring their stories back to the world. Which tales do you draw upon most? Which ones do you avoid? Do you prefer tales of heroism and stirring battles? Do you better relate to those tainted by darkness?

Associated Skills: Diplomacy, History

Associated Languages: Quori

Thoughtsinger: For the kalashtar, emotions are an art form. A thoughtsinger weaves dreams for his or her audience, projecting her creations directly into the mind and heart. Instead of the sound of music, you share memories of joy and sorrow. If you are a thoughtsinger of hashalaq heritage, you might choose to specialize in diplomacy and deception, but if you are a tsucora thoughtsinger, you could prey on the doubts and fears of your foes. As you weave dreams, do you choose to do so with finesse and a light touch, or do you prefer to overwhelm your audience?

Associated Skills: Diplomacy, Insight

Associated Languages: Quori

Mythspeakers and Myths

The mythspeaker is a possible background for a bard, ardent, or shaman, but it is especially appropriate for a vestige pact warlock. In developing your character, work with your Dungeon Master to tie your vestiges to Eberron. Instead of King Elidyr, you draw on the proud vestige of Karrn the Conqueror. Mount Vaelis could be Mighty Korrandar, the mountain home of the legendary Storm Guardians of Adar. Xandor the Mad might be the Gatekeeper druid who created the horrid animals, opening his mind to the ways of Xoriat to learn how to destroy it. With History, Diplomacy, and Bluff at your disposal you can be as skilled a storyteller as any bard; the difference it that for you, the figures in these stories are as real as any mortal.

Racial Feats

Kalashtar have access to a number of unique feats. While many of these feats suggest a particular spiritual heritage, this is not a prerequisite to taking the feat.

Heroic Tier Feats

The following feats are suitable for any character who meets the prerequisite.

Ardent Tsucora Initiation

Prerequisite: Kalashtar, ardent, *ardent outrage* class feature

Benefit: When you use *ardent outrage*, each target treats squares adjacent to you as difficult terrain until the start of your next turn.

Battlemind Duulora Initiation

Prerequisite: Kalashtar, battlemind, *speed of thought* class feature

Benefit: When you use *speed of thought*, you mark each enemy adjacent to you at the end of the move until the end of its next turn.

Dual Mind Strength

Prerequisite: Kalashtar

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to damage rolls with psychic powers. The bonus increases to +3 at 11th level and +4 at 21st level.

Psion Hashalaq Initiation

Prerequisite: Kalashtar, psion, *distract* class feature

Benefit: When you use *distract*, you can also slide the target 2 squares to a square adjacent to an ally.

Paragon Tier Feat

Feats in this section are available to any characters of 11th level and above who meet the prerequisites.

Dual Mind Reserves

Prerequisite: 11th level, kalashtar, any psionic class, Psionic Augmentation class feature

Benefit: When you use your second wind, you also regain 1 power point.

What's in a Name?

One easy way to add flavor to any character is to modify the names of your powers to better suit your background. If you're playing a quori nightmare shaman, you could change the name of *call to the ancestral warrior* to *dream of hope*. Your thaneborn barbarian might use *mindstorm rage* instead of *macetail's rage*. As long as the change doesn't require mechanical alterations, it's a simple way to suggest that your kalashtar character is drawing on dreams and psionic energy.

Kalashtar Beyond Eberron

With their ties to Sarlona and the Dreaming Dark, the kalashtar have strong connections to the *Eberron® Campaign Setting*. However, you don't have to have the struggle between the Dreaming Dark and the Path of Light to have kalashtar in the world. A kalashtar is an immortal dream spirit bound to a line of mortals. In Eberron, this is due to an ancient feud in the dreamworld. In another setting, this fusion might be the result of generations of psionic experiments, or even the work of a cabal of shamans—mortals reaching out to the world of dreams, instead of spirits in desperate need of refuge. Another possibility is that a kalashtar is the only one of its kind in the setting—the result of an accidental fusion of human and dream. Or perhaps a host of spirits in the region of dreams are seeking to invade the material world through possession, and the kalashtar character is the first failed attempt at such a possession; he or she must come to understand his or her origins and find a way to protect reality from the forces lurking in nightmares.

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of the Dungeons & Dragons® game since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the world of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the *Eberron Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War*™, he has worked for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

The Minotaurs of Mistwatch

By Steve Townshend
Illustration by Vincent Dutrait

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Far away from towns and other bastions of civilization, beyond the lonely places where the wild lands have overgrown the broken roads of ancient empires, the landscape gives way to a rugged mist-shrouded country. Steeped in fog, craggy foothills rise like turbulent earthen breakers churning against the mountains' broad base. Among the fir and ash, gigantic rock spires tower through the gloom to form a labyrinthine forest of stone.

From the misty chaos of this haunted realm the Guardian Clan minotaurs emerged. Divorced from their savage kin, they came to build a utopia upon the three tiers of the sunlit peak high above the mists.

History

Once the Guardian Clan protected the borderlands of minotaur territory. They were the scourge of the civilized races, and the heads of humans and elves ornamented their longhouses.

When Nerath fell, the world descended into chaos. While civilization was weak, the demon lord Yeenoghu, ancient enemy of the minotaurs, sent an immense horde of gnolls to stake his claim upon the world.

The Guardian Clan slew tens of thousands, but still the gnolls broke their borders and invaded the minotaur steppes; the gnolls burned the forests of the elves and toppled the cities of humans.

The Guardians refused to concede defeat to Yeenoghu at any price, so their chieftain Asteron Stonesplitter formed an alliance with the civilized races, and with their combined might they defeated the gnolls and drove them back into the wild.

In the wake of the war, the Guardian Clan changed. Despite the minotaurs' distaste for civilized folk, their allies had proven themselves ferocious warriors. In exchange for secrets of craft and building treasured by their allies, the Guardian minotaurs helped them reconstruct their broken realms.

The peace was short-lived. The other minotaur clans attacked the Guardians as traitors to the Horned King. Without a common enemy to bind them, old fears and hatreds quickly reemerged between the Guardians and the civilized folk.

Besieged and persecuted, the Guardians turned both from minotaur ways and from civilized society and departed in search of a remote, defensible land to call home.

After many years' journey, they followed the Mistroad River through the Stone Forest valley and up the side of Sentinel Peak. There they found a place above the mists where the Mistroad cascaded over three natural shelves. Equipped with knowledge and craft gleaned from multiple cultures, they shaped the land to reflect their own new society.

The Philosophy of the Labyrinth

When the Guardian Clan turned from the Horned King, their chieftain Asteron Stonesplitter had a dream. He dreamed he wandered the Endless Maze of Baphomet in the Abyss. Like a wild beast he fled its terrors, becoming ever the more lost.

When all seemed hopeless, Asteron gathered his wits and stopped to contemplate the labyrinth. Vigilant and focused, he navigated the maze while recording its passages in his mind. Free from emotion, he reflected upon his choices and corrected his mistakes. When Asteron discovered the way out of the maze, he awoke.

Asteron spoke his dream before the clan. He explained that through contemplation, vigilance, and reflection, minotaurs could escape the bondage of demon lords and become a free people with the power to make their own choices. These three became the tenets of the Philosophy of the Labyrinth that would form the physical and ideological structure of Mistwatch.

Mistwatch

The minotaurs correlate the three tiers of Mistwatch to the three tenets of the Philosophy of the Labyrinth—contemplation, vigilance, and reflection—and call them Highwatch, Skysea Vigil, and Shadowguard.

Highwatch

The Philosophy of the Labyrinth teaches that contemplation clarifies choices and reveals new paths. In like manner the uppermost shelf, Highwatch, observes and governs Mistwatch.

Upon Highwatch stands the Guardian Council, a magnificent longhouse built over an arching bridge that spans the first Mistroad cascade. Here, the heads of each family in Mistwatch gather in council to contemplate and decide upon matters affecting the town.

On its southern shelf, Highwatch holds the houses and training grounds of the warrior caste of the Guardian Clan, which also serves as the town's police force. Their sentry tower Tivorus commands a view of the town.

Most of the other buildings on Highwatch belong to the community and focus on the tenet of contemplation, including a school, a bathhouse fed by the Mistroad, and a hall of honors that chronicles the Guardian Clan's history in artifacts and trophies. These buildings are made of white granite, and many are built into the mountain.

Characters from Highwatch are frequently cunning, determined, noble, thoughtful, or urbane. They commonly use martial, arcane, divine, and psionic power sources.

Government

Mistwatch is an isolated community without a wide network of trade or use for coinage. Asteron Stonesplitter thought long on the way minotaurs were used to using brute strength to rule. Concerned that this path would lead inevitably back to Baphomet and savagery, he ordered a community where food, goods, and services would be shared by all its members, and where each family of the clan is represented equally in the council and thereby accountable for their family's honor and work.

Nevertheless, traditional minotaur values in conjunction with the necessity for strong defenses has given the warrior caste such significant power and influence in Mistwatch that some wonder how much voice other citizens truly have. This matter causes frequent debate in the council.

Minotaurs from Mistwatch can be judgmental, if not disdainful, of societies where wealth exists beside poverty. To the minotaurs, these cultures have not looked inward nor have they contemplated the blemishes afflicting them.

Skysea Vigil

In a world of demons and monsters, the vigilant minotaur is aware of dangers to the body, soul, and mind long before they strike. The middle shelf of Mistwatch manifests this tenet of the Philosophy of the Labyrinth with its protective sentry wall and with the high hedge walls that line its streets and partition its properties. Skysea Vigil is both an ordered minotaur community and a defensible labyrinth against any enemy that dares to invade it.

Skysea Vigil makes up the majority of Mistwatch, and it includes the town's trades, its market, its field of honor, and the labyrinth containing its holy shrines. When minotaurs speak of the "The Skysea Vigil," however, they refer to the sentry post along the great stone wall. Every minotaur of Mistwatch holds a vigil at this post, because it is a sacred rite in their philosophy: the embodiment of the tenet of vigilance.

The river Mistroad bursts from a stone minotaur head in the Skysea Vigil, forming a high, misty waterfall. The Stone Forest is invisible below, hidden beneath the sea of white mist that extends to the horizon and covers even the treetops. The tallest rock spires penetrate the mist, some ending in jagged points and others in flat landings, like stone islands atop high cliffs. The minotaurs call these stone protrusions the Horns and Teeth of Baphomet. In their eyes, the dangerous world beneath the mists represents the abyssal origins from which their race ascended, and where it might return should they compromise their vigilance.

Characters from the Skysea Vigil are frequently competitive, contemplative, dedicated, honorable, or perceptive. They commonly utilize martial and divine power sources.

Hedges

Upon the mountain grows a thick mountain brush the minotaurs cultivate to divide territory into ordered sections and to bewilder invaders to whom the straight, hedge-lined streets of Mistwatch might as well be a labyrinth of high green corridors. The minotaurs keep their hedges in fine order, often sculpting them into topiary shapes depicting enormous beasts, gods, and minotaur heroes.

The Field of Honor

All minotaurs in Mistwatch receive military training. The Field of Honor is where the minotaurs practice their combat skill and the minotaur sports "jotka," and "labyrinth." It serves as a festival ground, a combat arena, and a meeting place. Minotaur warriors complete their training in the field of honor under the warrior Brontox.

The Labyrinth of the Shrines

At the center of Mistwatch stands the Labyrinth of the Shrines, a great hedge maze where minotaurs wander in contemplation and reflection.

Although the Guardian Clan formed their own spiritual discipline when they turned from Baphomet, they respect the aims of the gods and primal spirits and welcome their allegiance against the forces of destruction. The maze contains shrines to several gods, but the minotaurs of Mistwatch particularly revere Melora and Moradin.

The Shadowguard

Reflection is the minotaur's means of gaining clarity, and of measuring themselves against the past to understand their true natures. The Philosophy of the Labyrinth teaches that the minotaur must reflect upon the paths he or she has chosen to gain perspective upon his or her life and guard against the shadowy seeds of corruption that take root in the soul.

The lowest tier of Mistwatch is called the Shadowguard, and it stands at the edge of the mists, above the Stone Forest and the chaotic world below. Formidable hunter-farmers dwell in the Shadowguard in tribelike families, cultivating the terraces and hunting the strange beasts of the Stone Forest. These families differ from the minotaurs that dwell above, and their concerns are attuned more to the natural world and to disturbances in the Stone Forest below that might upset the balance of life in Mistwatch.

Characters from the Shadowguard are frequently grim, mystical, pragmatic, savage, or stoic. They commonly have powers from primal and martial power sources.

Terraces

From the floor of the Stone Forest valley, curving terraces rise along the mountainside all the way to Highwatch. Upon these terraces, the minotaurs cultivate an impressive variety of vegetables, grains, and fruits using secrets learned from the elves. They carefully design the curving patterns of the terraces so that from Highwatch their mountain slopes resemble an ordered labyrinth.

The Stone Forest

In the dark natural labyrinth below Mistwatch, wild things shriek beyond the shrouded paths. The natural stone spires ascend out of sight through the cold mists above, surpassing the tallest trees.

Many minotaurs come to this deadly realm to hunt and to test themselves. Some say the mists resolve into shapes that grant insights and prophecy to the worthy. For those who understand its savage nature, the mists sometimes reveal places of astonishing beauty.

Many believe the Stone Forest hides a secret demongate, or that the land is a gate, and the mists open and close doors to different realms, depositing creatures from alien dimensions. Minotaur folk tales tell stories of travelers who have walked into the mists and vanished forever.

Notable Minotaurs

The following minotaurs have a large role to play among the minotaurs of Mistwatch.

Ameon the Wanderer

Few minotaurs realize that the gleaming ornamental horns of Ameon the Wanderer cover no true horns beneath them—that the gentle High Contemplative of the Labyrinth is, in fact, hornless.

He is called "the Wanderer" not only because he endlessly walks the Labyrinth of the Shrines in contemplation, but also because he trained for many years at the renowned Iocaste Academy, far away in the lands of humans. While he was abroad learning the ways and customs of other races for his clan, he was captured by humans. He offered no resistance but words. Still they called him a monster, caged him, tortured him, and cut off his horns before his friends from the academy rescued him.

Divine characters and knowledge-seekers learn the Philosophy of the Labyrinth from Ameon. Has your character found peace from Ameon's teachings, or has his example compelled you to seek another way? Is his philosophy sound, or are his words as false as the horns on his head?

Brontox the Blade

Brontox is the mighty champion of the Field of Honor who, despite the council's protests, once exiled himself to the Stone Forest for a year after he lost his temper in a tournament and brutally maimed his opponent. The greatest warrior in Mistwatch, as well as a direct descendant of Asteron Stonesplitter, Brontox could wield considerable political power if he wished, but he says that he sees himself fighting with the people, not over them.

For the resolute Brontox, honor is the greatest quality a minotaur warrior can possess. "Battles can be won or lost, but a minotaur with honor loses not himself," Brontox has said.

Martial characters likely learned their skill with weapons from Brontox, as well as the tenets of the Philosophy of the Labyrinth. Do you ascribe to Brontox's views on honor, or are his principles inherently faulty beliefs leading inevitably to defeat?

Crannach the Mauler

Crannach is a brutal one-eyed albino minotaur discovered in the Stone Forest when he was an infant. The master hunter raised him despite the council's warning that Crannach was a savage castoff, beholden to Baphomet by blood. Crannach grew up larger and stronger than any of the clan, and after many years battered and scarred by the perils of the Stone Forest, he became chief warden and leader of the hunters.

Crannach is cantankerous and gruff and wants nothing to do with the Philosophy of the Labyrinth, favoring raw power over contemplative thought. Some say he eats the flesh of his enemies and that he lives only to betray the clan to their enemies when the time is right.

Primal characters might learn much from the standoffish minotaur. Perhaps your character was adopted by Crannach or serves in his ferocious band of Shadowguard hunters. Or perhaps you fear Crannach and seek to expose him for the monster you believe him to be.

Dassia the Far-Seeing

The head of Mistwatch's warrior caste, the brilliant Dassia approaches every problem rationally with adamant determination, and her plans seldom fail. Though she lacks the sheer physical brawn of Crannach or Brontox, or the arcane mysticism of Ameon or Oboria, she has surpassed each of them to become the strongest voice of Mistwatch's council.

Dassia claims to have no bestial half, and in battle and in politics she is a quick and able strategist, content to wait for her enemies to show weaknesses so that she can exploit them. Some say she can read others' thoughts and anticipate events before they occur.

Psionic characters are sought out by Dassia as potential students or future opponents. Are you allied with Dassia and the powerful influence and secrets she offers, or do you believe her composed exterior conceals a cunning beast craving dominance at any cost?

Oboria the Terrible

Even the mightiest minotaurs of the clan fear the wrath of the magician Oboria. She dwells in seclusion upon Highwatch, consulting signs, omens, spirits, and strange beings from beyond the natural world. She detests visitors.

Eccentric and reactive, Oboria radiates power. She has no need for the Philosophy of the Labyrinth or any other philosophy—she believes minotaurs ought to release their past and consider their future. Oboria's critics claim she bargained away her soul in exchange for terrible power; Oboria cares nothing for their speculation, only for their noninterference and their respect.

Arcane characters would likely have learned their art through Oboria's strict, impatient tutelage, or perhaps Oboria acted as a medium to summon the entity that gave your character his or her power. Does your character see Oboria as a mad genius or a megalomaniac? Do her true loyalties lie with powerful and dangerous entities beyond Mistwatch, or is all her arcane bluster a façade that hides a secret inner kindness?

Mistwatch Backgrounds

Two backgrounds can help guide the roleplaying elements your Mistwatch minotaur character has.

Guardian Contemplative

Your people are a race of fierce warriors, but you know more effective ways to accomplish your goals than hammer and axe. Words hold power over emotions. Against ignorance, knowledge cuts sharper than any blade. The arm wields the axe, but the mind, spirit, and voice can control far mightier weapons. How does your clan view your choice? Do they respect your power or condemn you for weakness? Are you favored by the gods or feared as a practitioner of black magic?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Religion

Guardian Sentinel

Your clan once turned from the demon lord Baphomet to embrace the Philosophy of the Labyrinth. Yet destructive forces thrive, working relentlessly to bring the world to ruin. If left unchecked, you know they shall succeed. This is inevitable.

You left your home to seek out evil and annihilate it. Perhaps you do this out of conscience, honor, vengeance, or out of shame for your savage heritage. Or maybe you do it to appease the bloodthirsty beast lurking within your soul. Perhaps you do it because your race is more capable for the task than others, and the task must be done.

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Perception

New Minotaur Feats

The following feats provide minotaur characters with more options that have a Mistwatch flavor.

Heroic Tier Feats

The following feats are suitable for any character who meets the prerequisite.

Ferocious Frenzy

Prerequisite: Minotaur, Ferocity racial trait

Benefit: When you drop to 0 hit points or fewer, you can make a melee basic attack against each enemy adjacent to you with a –2 penalty to the attack rolls instead of making the attack Ferocity grants you.

Honor's Path

Prerequisite: Minotaur

Benefit: When an enemy provokes an opportunity attack from you, you can take an opportunity action to grant you or an ally adjacent to you a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn.

Minotaur Weapon Talent

Prerequisite: Minotaur

Benefit: You gain proficiency with the battleaxe, handaxe, warhammer, and throwing hammer.

Vigilant Recovery

Prerequisite: Minotaur, Wis 13

Benefit: When you hit an enemy with an attack, that enemy does not benefit from combat advantage against you until the start of your next turn.

Paragon Path

Mistwatch minotaur characters, or minotaur characters in general, can choose to follow the champion of the labyrinth paragon path.

Champion of the Labyrinth

I go where I choose. You go where I let you.

Prerequisite: Minotaur

You are the master of ways, routes, and paths. You have walked the lightless stone corridors of the Underdark, navigated the winding roads of humans and found your path through the enchanted forests of the Feywild. The labyrinth holds no terror for you. Its endless variations and routes contain your fortress, your philosophy, and your way.

For the minotaur who can discern its patterns, life is a great labyrinth, each new choice a path leading to a different destiny. Few possess the discipline to navigate the vast maze of the mind and soul without losing themselves to temptation and their own savage natures. Guided by the tenets of contemplation, vigilance, and reflection, though your choices have made you master of your own desire.

To the champion of the labyrinth, the battlefield is a maze as familiar as any other, and you move to take advantage of it. You control your own fate, and the direction you choose to travel here. As it is in life, so shall it be in battle.

Champion of the Labyrinth Path Features

Maze Adept Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you gain a +2 bonus to AC and speed and a +5 bonus to Athletics checks until the end of your next turn.

Uncanny Mobility (11th level): You gain a +4 bonus to saving throws against effects that immobilize or slow. Also, when you act in a surprise round, you can take one standard action and one move action or minor action.

Clear the Path (16th level): When you use *goring charge*, you can move through enemy squares during the charge. Whenever an enemy hits or misses you with an opportunity attack during this movement, you can slide that enemy 1 square or knock that enemy prone.

Dead End Strike — Champion of the Labyrinth Attack 11

You smite your foe with an attack and are prepared to spring if it should run.

Encounter ✦ Weapon
Standard Action **Melee or Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Your highest ability vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + your highest ability modifier damage. In addition, if the target moves before the start of your next turn, you can shift your speed to a square adjacent to the target as an opportunity action. If you do, the target takes 5 damage and ends its movement.

Unwavering Vigilance — Champion of the Labyrinth Utility 12

You fix your enemy fast within your gaze; no matter where it moves, it cannot escape you.

Encounter
Minor Action
Target: One enemy you can see
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you gain a +10 power bonus to Perception checks to detect or observe the target.

Labyrinth of Foes — Champion of the Labyrinth Attack 20

You navigate the battlefield as you would a labyrinth, striking and dodging amid the maze of your bewildered foes.

Daily ✦ Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Effect: You shift your speed. Each time you enter a square during this move, you can make the following attack.
Target: One creature you have not attacked with this power this turn
Attack: Your highest ability vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + your highest ability modifier damage, you slide the target 3 squares, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Miss: Half damage, and you slide the target 3 squares.

About the Author

Steve Townshend contributed to *Monster Manual 3*, which releases in June, and contributed to several D&D Insider projects. This is the first of several articles he has in the works.

Spellscars

By Daniel Jones
Illustration by John Stanko

With its diverse and chaotic impact, the effects of the Spellplague have been stubbornly difficult to systematize. Two victims of identical exposure can manifest their scars in ways so different as to belie any similarity in their experiences. One might develop hidden mental powers while the other is transformed into a disfigured monster with crippling and uncontrollable abilities.

Nevertheless, in the decades after the Year of Blue Flame, scholars noticed that the Spellplague frequently expanded the native characteristics and habitual activities of its victims. A quality each one possessed would be adjusted, twisted, and sometimes remade. For example, an elf's sight could morph to allow it to see that which is normally concealed, or an eladrin's ability to move could cause nearby creatures to move as well. What follows is a catalog of feats that can enhance or add to any given character's abilities.

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Feats

Each of the feats below requires the character to have a spellscar (as noted in the prerequisite entry).

Heroic Tier Feats

The following feats are suitable for any character who meets the prerequisite.

Arcane Malice

Prerequisite: Any arcane class, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you make an arcane daily attack, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls against one creature you hit with that attack until the end of the encounter. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, you also gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against that creature until the end of the encounter.

Corrupting Attacks

Prerequisite: You have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you hit a creature with an encounter or daily attack power, that creature takes a –1 penalty to one defense you targeted until the end of your next turn. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, increase the penalty to –2.

Earth Mote's Stability

Prerequisite: Goliath, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you make an Athletics check to perform a long jump, you can jump 1 square farther than your Athletics check indicates, and your jump can exceed your speed by 1 square. In addition, whenever you make a saving throw to avoid falling, you receive a +4 feat bonus to that roll. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, your long jumps can exceed your speed by 2 squares, and the bonus to saving throws to avoid falling increases to +6.

Flamespeed Shifting

Prerequisite: Razorclaw shifter, *razorclaw shifting* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: While under the effect of *razorclaw shifting*, you can shift 2 squares as a move action. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, whenever you shift while under the effect *razorclaw shifting*, your attacks deal 2 extra fire damage until the end of your turn.

Lingering Fade

Prerequisite: Gnome, *fade away* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: *Fade away* gains a sustain standard: You take 5 damage and the effect persists until the end of your next turn or until you attack. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, you take only 2 damage when you sustain *fade away*.

Memories of Destruction

Prerequisite: Deva, *memory of a thousand lifetimes* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you are subjected to a dazing or stunning effect that a save can end, you can expend *memory of a thousand lifetimes* to make a saving throw against that effect as an immediate interrupt. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, each enemy adjacent to you takes 5 fire damage when you expend *memory of a thousand lifetimes* in this manner.

Path of the Scarred

Prerequisite: Human, you have a spellscar

Benefit: You deal 1 extra fire damage with encounter and daily attack powers. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, you instead deal 2 extra fire damage.

Pernicious Onslaught

Prerequisite: You have a spellscar

Benefit: When a creature fails a saving throw against ongoing damage from one of your attacks, one creature adjacent to it takes fire and necrotic damage equal to the ongoing damage. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, the damage is equal to the ongoing damage plus 5.

Plague of Chance

Prerequisite: Halfling, *second chance* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: When you use *second chance* and the rerolled attack roll misses, the attacker takes fire and necrotic damage equal to your level and cannot see you until the end of your next turn. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, the attacker also takes fire and necrotic damage equal to your level if the rerolled attack roll hits.

Plagued Breath

Prerequisite: Dragonborn, *dragon breath* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Your *dragon breath* deals necrotic damage in addition to the damage type it already deals. Also, while you are bloodied, your breath attack deals 2 extra damage. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, a creature you hit with *dragon breath* also takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).

Plagued Regeneration

Prerequisite: Longtooth shifter, *longtooth shifting* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Increase the regeneration *longtooth shifting* grants you by 1. At 11th level, increase it by 2, and at 21st level, increase it by 3. Whenever you regain hit points from this regeneration, nonminion creatures adjacent to you take necrotic damage equal to the hit points you regained. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, any ally adjacent to you takes only 1 point of necrotic damage.

Plagueforged Accuracy

Prerequisite: Elf, *elven accuracy* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you use *elven accuracy*, the rerolled attack roll ignores cover and concealment, and it deals fire and necrotic damage in addition to its normal damage types if it hits. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, use *elven accuracy*, and hit with the rerolled attack roll, the target of that roll and each creature adjacent to it take fire and necrotic damage equal to 1 + one-half your level.

Plaguing Bloodhunt

Prerequisite: Tiefling, Bloodhunt racial trait, you have a spellscar

Benefit: When you hit a bloodied enemy, it takes 3 extra necrotic damage. Increase this damage to 6 at 11th level, and 9 at 21st level. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, the extra damage becomes fire and necrotic damage.

Planar Blurring

Prerequisite: Eladrin, *fey step* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Before or after you use *fey step*, you can slide one creature adjacent to you 1 square. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, before or after you use *fey step* you can also teleport a creature adjacent to you 2 squares.

Poison Plague Feast

Prerequisite: Dwarf, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you save against a poison effect, you gain a number of temporary hit points equal to 1 + one-half your level. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, whenever you save against a poison effect, you also gain a +2 bonus to saving throws until the end of your next turn.

Ravenous Blessing

Prerequisite: You have a spellscar

Benefit: Whenever you target an ally with a healing power, you can choose to take necrotic damage equal to 3 + one-half your level. This damage cannot be decreased in any way. If you choose to take necrotic damage, one ally affected by the power regains hit points equal to your level. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, an ally who regains hit points from this feat also gains a +2 power bonus to saving throws until the end of your next turn.

Scar and Fury

Prerequisite: Half-orc, *furious assault* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: When you use *furious assault*, each creature other than you or the triggering enemy that is adjacent to you or the triggering enemy takes 2 fire damage. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, the damage increases to 5 and becomes fire and necrotic damage.

Scar of the Shadowweave

Prerequisite: Revenant, *dark reaping* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: The damage granted by *dark reaping* becomes cold and necrotic damage and gains a +2 bonus. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, when a creature takes damage from your *dark reaping*, you gain concealment from the creature until the end of your next turn.

Spellcharged Channel

Prerequisite: Any divine class, Channel Divinity class feature, you have a spellscar

Benefit: When you use a Channel Divinity power, choose one of the following: one enemy adjacent to you takes a –2 penalty to all defenses until the end of your next turn, or one ally adjacent to you deals 4 extra fire and necrotic damage with attacks until the end of your next turn. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, you do not need to choose; you gain both benefits.

Spellscarred Invigoration

Prerequisite: You have a spellscar

Benefit: When a creature marked by you makes an attack that does not include you, it takes 1 fire and necrotic damage, and you regain 1 hit point. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, you instead regain hit points equal to your Constitution modifier.

Spellscarred Subterfuge

Prerequisite: Half-elf, you have a spellscar

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Diplomacy and Bluff. In addition, you gain a +4 bonus to all attempts made to conceal or disguise your spellscar. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, increase the feat bonus to +4.

Tainted Darkness

Prerequisite: Drow, *darkfire* racial power, you have a spellscar

Benefit: When you hit an enemy with *darkfire*, each time an attack hits that enemy before the end of your next turn, the enemy takes 2 extra fire damage. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, when you hit an enemy with *darkfire*, all creatures have concealment from the enemy until the end of your next turn.

Tenacity for Living

Prerequisite: Any primal class, you have a spellscar

Benefit: You gain a +4 feat bonus to saving throws against ongoing fire damage and ongoing necrotic damage. Whenever you grant an ally a saving throw against ongoing fire damage or ongoing necrotic damage, your ally makes the saving throw with a +4 power bonus. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, enemies adjacent to you take a –2 penalty to saving throws against ongoing fire damage and ongoing necrotic damage.

Unexpected Flourish

Prerequisite: Any martial class, you have a spellscar

Benefit: Choose one 1st-level at-will attack power from any arcane class. You can use that power as an encounter power. If you have the Student of the Plague feat, you can use your highest ability for attack rolls and damage rolls with the power you chose.

About the Author

This is **Daniel Jones's** first article for *Dragon*® magazine. Now he has a loving and beautiful wife, they're expecting their first child, and he's written for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. Dreams do come true.

Ritually Speaking:
Item Focus Rituals

By Peter Schaefer
Illustrations by Eva Widermann

Rituals are a source of flexible power in that they help those using them achieve lofty goals that force alone could not bring within their grasp. A ritual allows one to reshape the landscape, fly for hours, conceal the truth, hide items in a demiplane, and much more.

Most rituals are completely self-contained in that they require components and a ritual caster, with nothing more necessary. Some require a focus, which is an item needed for performing the ritual, but ritual casters can reuse these items. Additionally, as long as that focus is present, the ritual is ready at any time.

Another class of ritual is tied intimately to the magical power of enchanted items. Using only the item as a focus and no components, a ritual caster can enact magic centered on the purpose or history of the item. Beyond the specific focus for each ritual (which are magic items and are listed in the ritual's Component Cost entry), these rituals are normal. They must be mastered and kept in ritual books and can be scribed on ritual scrolls. Each magic item that is used as a focus for one of these rituals is in the *Player's Handbook*.

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Aura of True Vision

With the last word of the ritual and a wave of your ring of true seeing, *you banish invisibility.*

Level: 15
Category: Warding
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 10 minutes
Component Cost: Focus (*ring of true seeing*)
Market Price: 5,000 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

All invisible creatures and objects within 5 squares of the *ring of true seeing* become visible and cannot become invisible again while within 5 squares of the ring until the duration ends.

Corpselike Visage

The amulet of false life *also conceals that you remain alive.*

Level: 6
Category: Deception
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 24 hours
Component Cost: Focus (*amulet of false life*)
Market Price: 360 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

The creature wearing the amulet appears to be dead to all senses for the duration of the ritual's effect. This effect ends when the affected creature chooses to take an action or if the affected creature is no longer wearing the amulet.

Donning Trollflesh

Your warty green armor ripples with a semblance of the life it once had, then grows over your flesh to make you appear as a monstrous troll.

Level: 12
Category: Deception
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 24 hours
Component Cost: Focus (*trollskin armor*)
Market Price: 2,600 gp
Key Skill: Arcana

When you complete the ritual, the *trollskin armor* worn by you or an ally grows over its wearer to perfectly disguise the wearer as a troll. The wearer still benefits from its weapons, armor, and other magic items. Creatures that interact with the affected creature can make an Insight check against your Arcana check to perceive the deception only if the affected creature does something blatantly wrong, such as being unable to speak Giant or failing to regenerate.

Dragonward

You expand the magic of your dragondaunt shield *into the space around you and your allies, preventing the dragon from coming near you.*

Level: 10
Category: Binding
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 1 hour
Component Cost: Focus (*dragondaunt shield*)
Market Price: 1,000 gp
Key Skill: Arcana

You create a stationary ward in a burst 6 centered on the *dragondaunt shield*. The affected area glows faintly silver for the duration of the ritual's effect. A dragon whose level is lower than your Arcana check result minus 15 cannot enter the affected area or affect creatures inside or through the area. Other dragons can, but they take force damage equal to your Arcana check result and end the effect when they do so.

Evard's Extensible Rope

Your coil of golden rope elongates as you complete this ritual.

Level: 10
Category: Exploration
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 4 hours or until dismissed
Component Cost: Focus (*rope of climbing*)
Market Price: 1,000 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

Your *rope of climbing* lengthens until it is as much as 1,000 feet long.

Follow the Voice

The rest of the world darkens until the sending stone *is all you can see. You pass through a sightless world of echoes and lost voices before your reappear near your stone's twin.*

Level: 16
Category: Travel
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 1 minute
Component Cost: Focus (*sending stones*)
Market Price: 9,000 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

Before you can use this ritual, a creature must have spoken to you through a *sending stone* attuned to the stone you use for this ritual.

You fold yourself and each ally you choose who is within 3 squares of you through a *sending stone* you hold. At the end of the duration, you reappear outside the *sending stone* attuned to your *sending stone*. If your stone has multiple attuned stones, you appear outside the one used to speak to your stone before you began the ritual.

Once the ritual's duration ends, the *sending stones* cannot serve as the focus for this ritual again for 24 hours, and you cannot cast it again for 24 hours.

Memory of a Thousand Deaths

The tanned skins of the creatures that make up your deathcut armor *quiver and empathically indicate nearby necromancy.*

Level: 6
Category: Divination
Time: 20 minutes
Duration: 10 minutes
Component Cost: Focus (*deathcut armor*)
Market Price: 360 gp
Key Skill: Religion

You open yourself to the vestigial spirits bound to your *deathcut armor* and learn about necromancy within your immediate environs (within 1 mile of you).

You can ask a number of questions based on the result of your Religion check about undead creatures, necromantic terrain and hazards, necromancers, and other necromantic aspects of your surroundings. Typical questions are about the presence, type, quantity, and rough location of such necromantic features. The spirits communicate empathically and are poor at complex answers.

Check Result	Number of Questions
9 or lower	1
10–19	2
20–29	3
30–39	4
40 or higher	5

Memory of the Dragon

Each dragonslayer weapon *captures the memories and personality of the first dragon it slays. You tap those memories for your own use.*

Level: 12
Category: Divination
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 5 minutes
Component Cost: Focus (*dragonslayer weapon*)
Market Price: 2,600 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

When you complete the ritual, you ask a question of the first dragon slain by the *dragonslayer weapon* you hold, and it answers that question to the best of its ability. It knows only what it knew in life and has no particular foreknowledge of events (though it might speculate).

If you choose, you can instead view one of the dragon's memories as though it were happening to you. You can name aspects of the memory you want to view, and if you make no restrictions, the ritual shows you a memory pivotal to the dragon's experience.

This ritual can be performed only once every 24 hours.

Quench the Flame

The flamedrinker armor *you wear glows red with heat as it absorbs all the flames in your vicinity.*

Level: 12
Category: Exploration
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 4 hours or until dismissed
Component Cost: Focus (*flamedrinker armor*)
Market Price: 2,600 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

For the duration of the ritual, the *flamedrinker armor* you or an ally wears absorbs all natural flames within 20 squares of the armor, quenching them instantly. It glows red each time it absorbs a flame and grows hot over time, but this heat does not harm the armor's wearer.

Self-Holding Bag

Tucking your bag of holding *into itself, you make it disappear completely into an impossible space.*

Level: 5
Category: Exploration
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 24 hours
Component Cost: Focus (*bag of holding*)
Market Price: 250 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

You fold your *bag of holding* into itself and bind the resulting nothing to you. For the duration, you can pull the *bag of holding* out of an extradimensional space or put it back as a minor action. When the duration ends, the bag reappears at your feet.

Snowstorm Summons

You draw the power of your staff of winter *out and cast it into the air, bringing sudden chill and the promise of snow.*

Level: 14
Category: Exploration
Time: 30 minutes
Duration: Special
Component Cost: Focus (*staff of winter*)
Market Price: 4,500 gp
Key Skill: Arcana or Nature

You change the weather within a 2-mile radius of the *staff of winter* to that of a heavy blizzard in the dead of winter. If the staff moves, the effect of the ritual moves with it. The bearer of the staff controls the blizzard's general tendencies, such as the direction and intensity of the wind or the degree of obscurity from snow. The bearer of the staff cannot control specific applications of the weather, such as specific gusts of wind or specific squares of obscuring terrain. The altered weather persists for a duration you choose up to the maximum determined by your skill check result.

Check Result	Maximum Duration
19 or lower	2 hours
20-29	4 hours
30-39	16 hours
40 or higher	24 hours

Once the blizzard ends, the *staff of winter* cannot serve as the focus for this ritual again for 24 hours, and you cannot cast it again for 24 hours.

Wavestrider Enchantment

Your wavestrider boots *allow you and your allies to walk on water.*

Level: 4
Category: Exploration
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 1 hour
Component Cost: Focus (*wavestrider boots*)
Market Price: 175 gp
Key Skill: Arcana

You and each ally within 2 squares of you can move on water as if it were solid ground. Rapids or choppy seas are considered difficult terrain. The target of this ritual can end its benefit as a free action. The target can immerse itself in water or swim underwater if desired without needing to end the ritual.

Windmaster's Mantle

This ritual expands the power of your mantle of the seventh wind *to all your allies.*

Level: 20
Category: Travel
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 2 hours
Component Cost: Focus (*mantle of the seventh wind*)
Market Price: 25,000 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

You and each ally within 5 squares of you gains overland flight 20. Those affected by this ritual can take no actions other than moving while flying at your overland flight speed. Each individual affected by the ritual can end its effect on that individual (no action required), and if that individual ends the effect, he or she floats harmlessly to the ground. When using this ritual to fly for 10 hours, including rests, you can travel approximately 100 miles.

About the Author

Peter Schaefer wakes regularly from dreams of grotesque terrors so defiling of the mind and innocence that they deserve the real fear they cause while remaining wholly imaginary. Peter fought for his current job at Wizards of the Coast, where he works as an RPG developer on books such as *Adventurer's Vault™ 2*, *Divine Power™*, and many *D&D® Insider™* articles, so the he can prevent such thought-corrupting constructs of the id from entering the wider consciousness of the public. He replaces such ideas with functional rules and takes on the fantasy genre.

Class Acts: Assassin

Shadow's Seduction

By Robert J. Schwalb

Illustration by Mike Faille

The assassin, introduced in *Dragon*® #379, presents the first look at the shadow power source and hints at the requirements to master it. Assassins, and other classes that wield shadow magic, forfeit a shard of their souls to safely channel the dark energy imbuing the Shadowfell. Not only does following this path require a strong commitment due to the sacrifice involved, but users of shadow magic might find that people view their abilities negatively. One doesn't dip into the shadow power source without paying a price, and those who seek out its power must do so with a full awareness of the perilous demands they must meet.

Although uncommon, opportunities exist for those unwilling to make the full commitment to the Shadowfell's power. Yet if such individuals think they can escape the plane's steep price completely, they learn their error quickly. As with any class, you can choose the assassin as your sole class, as a hybrid class, or by taking multiclass feats. This article presents the assassin hybrid class, while also expanding options available to all assassins.

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The Hybrid Assassin

You have accepted your dark reflection and understand its place in your soul. Yet you are unwilling to surrender completely to the darkness you now harbor.

What drove you to seek out the Shadowfell's power? Were you driven by grief, guilt, hatred, or vengeance? Something else? Is your divided focus the result of an incomplete bond? Or do you dabble in other areas to better conceal your sinister nature?

As a hybrid assassin, you can call forth shrouds to help guide your attacks where they can deal the most damage, but you sacrifice many of the techniques assassins use to evade their enemies.

CLASS TRAITS

Role: Striker
Power Source: Shadow
Key Abilities: Dexterity, Charisma, Constitution
Armor Proficiencies: Cloth, leather; light shield
Weapon Proficiencies: One-handed simple melee, military heavy blades, military light blades, simple ranged
Implements: Ki focuses
Bonus to Defense: +1 Fortitude or Will

Hit Points at 1st Level: 5
Hit Points per Level Gained: 2
Healing Surges per Day: 3
Trained Skills: You gain one extra trained skill, chosen from the list of class skills below.

Class Skills: Acrobatics (Dex), Arcana (Int), Athletics (Str), Bluff (Cha), Endurance (Con), Insight (Wis), Perception (Wis), Stealth (Dex), Streetwise (Cha), Thievery (Dex)

Class Features: ***Assassin's shroud*** (hybrid)
Hybrid Talent Options: Guild Training, *shade form*, *shadow step*

Assassin's Shroud (Hybrid)

You gain the assassin power *assassin's shroud* (*Dragon* #379, page 19), except you can subject a target to a maximum of two shrouds and you can invoke your shrouds on a target only when you attack with an assassin power or an assassin paragon path power.

Hybrid Talent Options

If you take the Hybrid Talent feat, you can select from Guild Training, *shade form*, and *shadow step*.

Guild Training

When you select this option, you can choose one of the following class features.

Bleak Disciple (Hybrid): This class feature functions exactly as the assassin class feature (*Dragon* #379, page 17), except you gain temporary hit points only when you hit an unbloodied target when using an assassin attack power or assassin paragon path attack power.

Night Stalker (Hybrid): This class feature functions exactly as the assassin class feature (*Dragon* #379, page 17), except the bonus to damage rolls applies only to attacks made when using assassin powers and assassin paragon path powers.

Shade Form

This class feature functions exactly as the assassin class feature (*Dragon* #379, page 19).

Shadow Step

This class feature functions exactly as the assassin class feature (*Dragon* #379, page19).

Good Hybrid Combinations

Assassins combine best with other striker classes since doing so provides two methods for dealing striker damage. The strongest combinations include assassin/rogue, assassin/monk, and assassin/ranger. If want to develop leader techniques, the assassin/bard is a good choice. For defender, think about the assassin/paladin to improve your durability and gain self-healing. Combining an assassin with controller classes is difficult since few abilities overlap. To add control techniques, you are served better by picking up the sorcerer or warlock. Although they are not controllers, many spells available to them have controller effects.

NEW FEATS

The following feats expand options for all kinds of assassins. Any character who meets the prerequisites can take these feats.

Heroic Tier Feats	Prerequisites	Benefit
Assassin's Challenge	Assassin, paladin, *assassin's shroud*	Use holy symbol as implement for assassin powers, *divine challenge* deals extra damage to *assassin's shroud* target
Betrayal of Zerthimon	Githzerai, assassin, *assassin's shroud*	*Assassin's shroud* target grants combat advantage if it hasn't yet acted
Cursed Shadow	Assassin, warlock	Gain Shadow Walk; use rods as implements
Darkness's Wings	Shadar-kai, assassin, *shadow jaunt*	Regain *shadow jaunt* and gain darkvision
Disciplined Killer	Assassin, monk, *assassin's shroud*	Extra damage with Flurry of Blows and *assassin's shroud*
Eilserv's Treachery	Drow, assassin, Lolthtouched, *shade form*	Expend Lolthtouched power to regain *shade form*
Eye of Death and Despair	Assassin, *assassin's shroud*, Vistani Heritage	*Evil eye of the Vistani* and *assassin's shroud* target is immobilized and grants combat advantage
Far Shadow	Drow, assassin, *cloud of darkness* power	*Cloud of darkness* becomes area burst 1 within 10 squares
Flickering Fortunes	Githzerai, assassin, *shade form*	Use *shade form* when you take your second wind
Ghostly Voyage	Wilden, assassin, *voyage of the ancients*	Gain insubstantial with *voyage of the ancients*
Horned Nightmare	Minotaur, assassin, *shade form* power	Gain phasing during charges with *shade form*
Hunting Shadow	Wilden, assassin, *assassin's shroud*, *pursuit of the hunter*	Extra damage and teleport instead of shift with *pursuit of the hunter*
Insidious Shroud	Changeling, assassin, *changeling trick*, *assassin's shroud*	Successful *changeling trick* allows extra use of *assassin's shroud*
Lolth's Embrace	Drow, assassin, *darkfire*, *assassin's shroud*	When you use *darkfire* you can also use *assassin's shroud*
Menacing Sorcery	Assassin, sorcerer, *assassin's shroud*	Ranged sorcerer attacks do not provoke opportunity attacks from *assassin's shroud* target
Merciless Nature	Wilden, assassin, *wrath of the destroyer*	Gain combat advantage with *wrath of the destroyer* attack if triggered by *assassin's shroud* target
Murderous Hunter	Assassin, ranger, *assassin's shroud*	*Assassin's shroud* target takes Hunter's Quarry damage even on a miss
Roguish Killer	Assassin, rogue, *assassin's shroud*	*Assassin's shroud* target take sneak attack damage even on a miss
Shadowforged Killer	Warforged, assassin, *warforged resolve*, *shade form*	Expend *warforged resolve* to regain *shade form*
Spirited Shadows	Drow, assassin, *cloud of darkness*, *shadow step*	Teleport farther and gain combat advantage with *shadow step* and *cloud of darkness*
Uncovered Hatred	Kalashtar, assassin, *shade form*	Enemy triggering *bastion of mental clarity* takes psychic damage
Word of Shadow	Assassin, bard, *majestic word*	*Majestic word* grants concealment

Paragon Tier Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Darkened Soul	Shadow Initiate, paragon multiclassing	Gain *shade form*

Heroic Tier Feats

The following feats are suitable for any character who meets the prerequisite.

Assassin's Challenge

Prerequisite: Assassin, paladin, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: You can use a holy symbol as an implement for your assassin implement powers.

In addition, whenever a creature takes damage from your *divine challenge* power, that creature takes 1 extra damage for each of your *assassin's shrouds* on it.

Betrayal of Zerthimon

Prerequisite: Githzerai, assassin, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you target an enemy that has not yet acted in the encounter with your *assassin's shroud* power, the enemy grants combat advantage until the start of your next turn.

Cursed Shadow

Prerequisite: Assassin, warlock

Benefit: You can use rods as implements for your assassin implement powers.

In addition, you gain the warlock's Shadow Walk class feature if you do not already have it.

Darkness's Wings

Prerequisite: Shadar-kai, assassin, *shadow jaunt* power

Benefit: You can expend your *shade form* power as a free action to regain the use of your *shadow jaunt* power.

In addition, you gain darkvision.

Disciplined Killer

Prerequisite: Assassin, monk, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you use Flurry of Blows against the target of your *assassin's shroud* power, you deal 1 extra damage to the target for each of your *assassin's shrouds* on it.

Eilserv's Treachery

Prerequisite: Drow, assassin, Lolthtouched racial power, *shade form* power

Benefit: You can expend your Lolthtouched power as a free action to regain the use of your *shade form* power.

Eye of Death and Despair

Prerequisite: Assassin, *assassin's shroud* power, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you use *evil eye of the Vistani* against the target of your *assassin's shroud* power, the target instead grants combat advantage and is immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Far Shadow

Prerequisite: Drow, assassin, *cloud of darkness* power

Benefit: You can use *cloud of darkness* as an area burst 1 within 10 squares.

Flickering Fortunes

Prerequisite: Githzerai, assassin, *shade form* power

Benefit: You can use *shade form* as a free action when you use your second wind.

Ghostly Voyage

Prerequisite: Wilden, assassin, *voyage of the ancients* power

Benefit: When you use *voyage of the ancients*, you also become insubstantial until the end of your next turn.

Horned Nightmare

Prerequisite: Minotaur, assassin, *shade form* power

Benefit: You gain phasing when you charge while benefiting from your *shade form* power.

Hunting Shadow

Prerequisite: Wilden, assassin, *assassin's shroud* power, *pursuit of the hunter* power

Benefit: You teleport instead of shift when using *pursuit of the hunter*. In addition, until the end of your next turn, your attacks against the triggering enemy deal 1 extra damage for each *assassin's shroud* to which the target is subjected.

Insidious Shroud

Prerequisite: Changeling, assassin, *changeling trick* power, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you use *changeling trick* and you succeed on the Bluff check, you can use *assassin's shroud* once against the target even if you have already used it on the target this turn.

Lolth's Embrace

Prerequisite: Drow, assassin, *darkfire* power, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you hit a target with *darkfire*, you can use *assassin's shroud* once against the target even if you have already used it on the target this turn.

Menacing Sorcery

Prerequisite: Assassin, sorcerer, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: Your ranged sorcerer attacks do not provoke opportunity attacks from a creature subject to your shroud.

Merciless Nature

Prerequisite: Wilden, assassin, *wrath of the destroyer* power

Benefit: If the enemy triggering your *wrath of the destroyer* power is subject to one or more of your shrouds, you gain combat advantage for the melee basic attack or charge attack.

Murderous Hunter

Prerequisite: Assassin, ranger, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you invoke your *assassin's shroud* and miss the target, you can deal the bonus damage from your Hunter's Quarry to the target if you invoked two or more shrouds when you attacked it.

Roguish Killer

Prerequisite: Assassin, rogue, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you invoke your *assassin's shroud* and miss the target, and the target grants combat advantage to you, you can deal the bonus damage from your Sneak Attack to the target if you invoked two or more shrouds when you attacked it.

Shadowforged Killer

Prerequisite: Warforged, assassin, *warforged resolve* power, *shade form* power

Benefit: You can expend your *warforged resolve* power as a free action to regain the use of your *shade form* power.

Spirited Shadows

Prerequisite: Drow, assassin, *cloud of darkness* power, *shadow step* power

Benefit: When you use *shadow step* while within the area of your *cloud of darkness* power, you can instead teleport a number of squares equal to your Dexterity modifier. One enemy adjacent to you at the end of the teleport grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Uncovered Hatred

Prerequisite: Kalashtar, assassin, *shade form* power

Benefit: When you use *bastion of mental clarity*, the triggering enemy takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier plus 1 damage for each of your shrouds on it.

Word of Shadow

Prerequisite: Assassin, bard, *majestic word* power

Benefit: When you use *majestic word*, you can choose to give any or all your targets concealment until the start of your next turn.

Paragon Tier Feat

The feat in this section is available to any characters of 11th level and above who meet the prerequisites.

Darkened Soul

Prerequisite: 11th level, Shadow Initiate feat, paragon multiclassing as assassin.

Benefit: You gain the assassin *shade form* power.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose work can be found in numerous roleplaying sourcebooks and accessories. His most recent work can be found in the *Dark Sun® Campaign Setting*, *Dark Sun Creature Catalogue*, *Monster Manual® 3*, and the *Player's Handbook® 3*. Robert lives in Tennessee.

Class Acts: Shaman

By Russell Jones and Jeramy Pappas
Illustration by Peter Tikos

A shaman's uniqueness in the leader role comes from more than just the source of his or her power. Although your shaman character fills the same role as a cleric, warlord, artificer, or bard, how your shaman sees the world and leads allies through it are vastly different. Where others see actions and consequences, your character sees a writhing vortex of spirits underlying every move your shaman and his or her allies make. Much like an architect reads a blueprint, your shaman sees life not as a whole but as a collection of parts invisible to most of the outside world.

As your shaman character grows in power, his or her view of the spirit world becomes clearer, and you can focus your character's abilities to manipulate and coax more power from the spirits around him or her in unique ways. Each shaman character can become a paragon of the spirit realm and the natural world.

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Soul Igniter

"We will burn your evil from the world."

Prerequisite: Shaman, *call spirit companion* power

The essence of fire is the essence of potential. Even the smallest flame can become a raging conflagration, capable of consuming everything in its path. Fire is an unstoppable force unmatched by almost anything else in the primal world. Likewise, the spirit of flame has the capability to consume everything it touches, growing with and reshaping the world around it. However, every fire spirit starts small; only with fuel can it grow.

As a soul igniter, you imbue the physical being with fiery spirits, providing a limitless supply of fuel for these powerful forces. This imbued spirit is called Soulfire, and it allows your allies to move at the speed of a raging wildfire while enhancing their blows with burning spiritual flames. As you grow in power, your spirit companion also becomes a stronger conduit for the spirit of flame, capable of unleashing scorching fury at your enemies.

Soul Igniter Features

Soulfire (11th level): You gain the *soulfire* power.

Soulfire — Soul Igniter Feature

You call upon primal spirits of flame to wreathe your target in white-hot fire.

At-Will ✦ Fire, Primal
Free Action — **Close** burst 10
Trigger: You or an ally in burst scores a critical hit with an attack
Target: The triggering creature
Effect: Until the end of the target's next turn, the target gains a +2 power bonus to speed, a +2 power bonus to Reflex, and deals extra fire damage equal to your Wisdom modifier each time he or she hits with an attack.

Soulfire Action (11th level): When you spend an action point, you can use your *soulfire* power as a free action, targeting yourself and two allies in range.

Fiery Spirit (16th level): If a melee or ranged attack deals damage to your spirit companion and causes it to disappear, your spirit deals 1d6 + your Wisdom modifier fire damage to each enemy adjacent to it.

Soul Igniter Powers

Soul Flare — Soul Igniter Attack 11

Fiery spirits surround and pierce through your enemies, then pour into an ally. Your compatriot's eyes glow with white-hot brilliance as waves of heat emanate from his or her body.

Encounter ✦ Fire, Implement, Primal
Standard Action — **Area** burst 1 within 10
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier fire damage.
Effect: You use your *soulfire* power on one ally in the burst as a free action.

Soul Furnace — Soul Igniter Utility 12

The air around your allies erupts in licking fire, scorching any enemy that dares to come too close.

Daily ✦ Fire, Primal
Minor Action — **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, any enemy that starts its turn or enters a square adjacent to a creature affected by your *soulfire* power takes fire damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Spirit Detonation — Soul Igniter Attack 20

Your spirit companion explodes in a wave of fiery spirits, burning your enemies and empowering your allies.

Daily ✦ Fire, Implement, Primal, Spirit
Standard Action — **Close** burst spirit 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d10 + Wisdom modifier fire damage. If a creature under the effect of your *soulfire* power is within the burst, this attack instead deals 4d10 + Wisdom modifier fire damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Stormcaller

"I have seen the power of the great storm, and I choose to make it my own. I will cast you aside like a speck of dust on the wind."

Prerequisite: Shaman, *call spirit companion* power

Legend tells of a great spiritual storm that forms the center of the natural world. This great, eternal upheaval represents the power and feral nature of the primal world. Spirits of the great wind ebb and flow around spirits of rain and thunder as aspects of lightning streak and flash in an eternal, chaotic mass. The chaos inherent in the great storm is equal only to the power that lies within it.

Only a powerful shaman can take up the mantle of the stormcaller. You can bring temporary order to the great storm and bend its power to your will. You call forth lightning spirits to empower your companions. You summon primal rains and wind to batter and bewilder your foes, while sheltering your allies and allowing them to move around the battlefield effortlessly. Your close ties to the great storm grant you and your allies protection from nature's fury.

Stormcaller Path Features

Charged Companion (11th level): Whenever an enemy hits or misses your spirit companion, that enemy takes lightning damage equal to your Wisdom modifier. If the attack causes your spirit companion to disappear, the enemy takes 5 extra lightning damage and is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Driving Action (11th level): When you spend an action point, you can shift a number of squares equal to your Wisdom modifier, and each ally within 5 squares of you can shift 1 square.

Stormcaller Resistance (16th level): You and your spirit companion gain resist 10 thunder and resist 10 lightning. Each ally adjacent to your spirit companion gains resist 5 thunder and resist 5 lightning.

Stormcaller Powers

Forked Lightning — Stormcaller Attack 11

Spirits of lightning leap from your outstretched fingers, slamming into your enemies then encircling your allies.

Encounter ✦ Implement, Lightning, Primal
Standard Action — **Area** burst 1 within 10
Target: One or two creatures in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier lightning damage.
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, each ally within the burst deals extra lightning damage equal to your Wisdom modifier each time it hits an enemy with an attack.

Blinding Torrent — Stormcaller Utility 12

You summon torrents of rain spirits from the great storm, concealing your allies and making your enemies more susceptible to nature's fury.

Daily ✦ Primal, Zone
Minor Action — **Area** burst 2 within 5
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each ally within the zone gains concealment. Each enemy that enters the zone or starts its turn there gains vulnerable 5 lightning and vulnerable 5 thunder.

Spirit Cyclone — Stormcaller Attack 20

Ancient winds spiral around your spirit companion, sending your enemies to their knees and allowing your allies to move with incredible speed.

Daily ✦ Implement, Primal, Spirit, Zone
Standard Action — **Close** burst spirit 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 4d8 + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target falls prone.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any ally within the zone can shift 3 squares to another square within the zone as a move action.

Animus Predator

"You might not realize it now, but this is really going to hurt."

Prerequisite: Shaman, *call spirit companion* power

At the core of every creature lies the animating spirit that gives life or mobility, called the animus. The shaman sees the animus in the spirit world as one of the most fundamental forces required for life. Therefore, striking at or manipulating this spirit is akin to changing the very fiber of a creature's being, turning a huge advantage into the weakness that brings about your enemy's downfall.

A shaman who walks the path of the animus predator has a simple philosophy: When you see no weakness, create one. By manipulating the animus, you make your foes weak to your allies' attacks. You strip away resistances and immunities, leaving your target open to devastating blows. You give your companions the perfect weapon to bring true devastation to your enemies.

Animus Predator Path Features

Breaching Spirit (11th level): Attacks made against any enemy adjacent to your spirit companion ignore insubstantial. When you use a spirit power to damage a creature that has regeneration, the regeneration doesn't function until the end of your next turn.

Predator Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, one enemy adjacent to your spirit companion gains vulnerable 5 damage until the end of your next turn.

Spiritual Piercing (16th level): When you complete an extended rest, choose a damage type. Your attacks and attacks made by each ally adjacent to your spirit companion ignore the first 10 points of resistance to that damage type, and the attacks treat a creature with immunity to that damage type as if it had resist 20 to that damage type instead.

Animus Predator Powers

Exposing Spirit — Animus Predator Attack 11

Your spirit companion lashes out, leaving an aura around your foe that exposes a previously hidden weakness.

Encounter ✦ Implement, Primal, Spirit
Standard Action **Melee** spirit 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Will
Hit: 2d6 + Wisdom modifier damage. The target gains vulnerable 10 against one damage type of your choice until the end of your next turn.

Symbiotic Spirits — Animus Predator Utility 12

A shimmering spirit attaches to your enemies, peeling away their natural and magical defenses and imparting them to your allies.

Daily ✦ Primal, Spirit, Zone
Minor Action **Close** burst spirit 2
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. When you use this power, choose an enemy you can see. Each ally within the zone gains resist 10 to all damage types to which that enemy has resistance or immunity.

Animus Strike — Animus Predator Attack 20

Your spirit companion lashes out in a devastating strike, causing your opponent to reel in pain. Now, the foe's every attack has become another opening for your allies.

Daily ✦ Implement, Primal, Spirit
Standard Action **Melee** spirit 1
Effect: Choose one of the following types of damage: acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, radiant, or thunder. Make the following attack.
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Will
Hit: 4d8 + Wisdom modifier damage of the type you chose and ongoing 10 damage of the type you chose (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Whenever the target hits one of your allies with an attack, the target takes damage of the type you chose equal to your Wisdom modifier (save ends).

Scion of Renewal

"We are bathed in the spirits of the great river. Nothing you do can bring us harm."

Prerequisite: Shaman, *call spirit companion* power

One of most ancient of shamanistic practices focuses on the river of renewal, an ancient, all-encompassing flow of spiritual energy that protects living things and allows them to heal. Tribal elders invoke the river of renewal to cleanse plagues, grow crops destroyed by pestilence, and help close the wounds of war. No sickness exists that this powerful energy cannot cure. Many shamans who strive to end suffering and bring healing to their people seek to be bathed in the spirits of the river.

As a scion of renewal, you invoke spirits from the river to cleanse your allies. Through your power, the body's natural healing is accelerated, making it able to better fight off diseases and effects of a natural and magical nature. You can call on the spirits of the river to strike at your foes, leaving behind an aura of healing for your allies. Your spirit companion becomes a fount of spiritual energy from the river of renewal, taking on a watery appearance as it provides a never-ending supply of pure energy to bolster those around it.

Scion of Renewal Path Features

Fountain of Life (11th level): Your *healing spirit* power uses d8s instead of d6s to determine the bonus healing received by an ally adjacent to your spirit companion. The target of your *healing spirit* power can choose not to regain the hit points from spending a healing surge and instead make a saving throw.

Mending Action (11th level): When you spend an action point, each ally adjacent to your spirit companion can regain hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Striking Surge (16th level): When an ally adjacent to your spirit companion uses his or her second wind, he or she also gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls until the end of his or her next turn.

Scion of Renewal Powers

Renewing Wash — Scion of Renewal Attack 11

A glistening spirit envelops your foe, allowing nearby allies to shrug off the evils of battle.

Encounter ✦ Implement, Primal
Standard Action **Close** blast 3
Target: One enemy in blast
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Wisdom modifier damage.
Effect: Each ally within the blast can make a saving throw as a free action against an effect that a save can end.

Rain of Renewal — Scion of Renewal Utility 12

Gleaming spirits rain down on your allies, bolstering their bodies' ability to ward off wounds and disease.

Daily ✦ Healing, Primal, Zone
Minor Action **Area** burst 2 within 5
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each ally within the zone gains a +2 power bonus to saving throws and cannot contract diseases from enemy attacks. Any bloodied ally gains regeneration 5 while within the zone. You can move the zone 5 squares as a minor action.

Purging Wave — Scion of Renewal Attack 20

A wave of spirits crashes down, battering your enemies and submerging your allies in the river of renewal.

Daily ✦ Implement, Primal
Standard Action **Area** burst 2 within 10
Target: One, two, or three enemies in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d10 + Wisdom modifier damage. Choose one ally within the burst subject to an effect that a save can end. That effect ends as if the ally had succeeded on a saving throw.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Each ally within the burst gains regeneration 10 until the end of your next turn.
Sustain Standard: The effect persists.

About the Authors

Russell Jones and **Jeramy Pappas** currently work in TV news, but would prefer to sit around and think about dwarves and goblins all day. They live in Arkansas, where they prowl the night looking for sparkly vampires to stake or a decent gaming store, whichever comes first. This is their second article for *Dragon*® magazine.

Class Acts: Fighters

By Daniel Jones
Illustration by Alexey Aparin

Shields have always been a dominant image in the fighter mythos. Combatants recognize the celebrated knight by the fearsome coat of arms on his or her shield. The vigilant guardian raises one to protect friends from dragon-fire. The fallen hero is carried home on his or her shield, which serves as the best reminder of the duty he or she gave his or her life to accomplish. This article provides numerous tools for characters who wish to continue that iconic tradition.

Below are new feats, powers, items, and more that you can use to reflect your character's mastery with a shield. These options allow your fighter to wield a shield as something greater than a mere boost to defense. Instead it becomes an integral component of your arsenal.

Fighter Powers

Fighters who choose to wield shields have many options that allow them to focus on that choice. Several of the powers detailed below require the fighter to strike with a shield rather than a more conventional melee weapon.

Level 1 At-Will Exploit

Shield Feint — **Fighter Attack 1**

With subtle movements and misdirection, you use your shield to keep your opponent unsure about your next attack.

At-Will ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you gain a +3 power bonus to your next attack roll against the target before the end of your next turn.
Level 21: 2[W] + Strength modifier.

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Level 1 Encounter Exploit

Shield Riposte — Fighter Attack 1

Sweeping an attack aside, you strike with your shield while your foe is out of position.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you hits or misses you or an ally with a melee attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Strength + 3 vs. Fortitude
Level 11: Strength + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Strength modifier damage, and you push the target 1 square. You then shift 2 squares to a square adjacent to the target.

Level 1 Daily Exploit

Shove and Slap — Fighter Attack 1

As you push away the foe in front of you, you greet another with the cold surface of your shield.

Daily ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Strength + 3 vs. Fortitude
Level 11: Strength + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Strength modifier damage, and you push the primary target a number of squares equal to 1 + your Wisdom modifier. You can shift 1 square into the space your target occupied.
Miss: Half damage, and you push the primary target 1 square.
Effect: Make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: One creature other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Strength + 3 vs. Fortitude
Level 11: Strength + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: Strength modifier damage, and the secondary target is dazed (save ends).

Level 2 Utility Exploit

Shielding Shove — Fighter Utility 2

You shove an ally out of harm's way with your shield.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Minor Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Target: One ally
Effect: You push the target 3 squares. Then you can mark an enemy adjacent to you until the end of your next turn.

Level 3 Encounter Exploit

Immediate Vengeance — Fighter Attack 3

An attack gets through, but before the attacker can withdraw, you smash your shield down upon it with crippling force.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you hits you or an ally with a melee attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Strength + 3 vs. Fortitude
Level 11: Strength + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.

Level 5 Daily Exploit

Unexpected Shield Bash — Fighter Attack 5

As your opponents guard against the relentless fury of your weapon, you surprise them with a shield attack that shows them you mean business.

Daily ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength + 4 vs. AC
Level 11: Strength + 6 vs. AC
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. AC
Hit: 3d10 + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You mark each enemy within 5 squares of you who can see you until the end of your next turn.

Level 6 Utility Exploit

Intimidating Reminder — Fighter Utility 6

Just the sight of your shield keeps the memory of its use fresh in the minds of your enemies.

Daily ✦ Martial, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Effect: Until the stance ends, enemies take a –2 penalty to Fortitude while adjacent to you.

Level 7 Encounter Exploit

Armored Assault — Fighter Attack 7

Burying your shoulder into your shield, you plow forward through any foe.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Effect: You move your speed. At one point during this movement, you can make the following attack.
Target: One enemy
Attack: Strength + 4 vs. Fortitude
Level 11: Strength + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the target 1 square and knock it prone.

Level 9 Daily Exploit

Shield and a Hard Place — Fighter Attack 9

Having maneuvered your foe into a disadvantageous position, you lunge and trap it with your shield.

Daily ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Target: One creature that is prone, adjacent to blocking terrain, or adjacent to an ally
Attack: Strength + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Strength modifier damage, and the target is grabbed. Until the grab ends, when the target starts its turn, it takes damage equal to your Strength modifier.
Miss: Half damage, and you slide the target 1 square.
Special: When charging, you can use this power in place of a melee basic attack.

Level 10 Utility Exploit

Shield Deflection — Fighter Utility 10

Attacks rebound from your shield to find new targets.

Daily ✦ Martial
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: An attack against your AC or Reflex misses you
Effect: Choose a creature within 2 squares of you and within range of the triggering attack, including the triggering attacker. The attacker repeats the attack against that creature.

Level 13 Encounter Exploit

Shield Bearer's Vendetta — Fighter Attack 13

When an enemy successfully attacks, you and your shield punish the foe—and any other enemies nearby.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Trigger: An enemy hits you or an ally adjacent to you with a melee attack
Effect: You can shift 2 squares to a square adjacent to the triggering enemy.
Target: Each enemy in burst you can see
Attack: Strength + 6 vs. Reflex
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Strength modifier damage, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

Level 15 Daily Exploit

Unstoppable Force — Fighter Attack 15

While you are safely behind your shield, nothing can stand in your way.

Daily ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Effect: You move your speed. Each time you enter a square adjacent to an enemy, make the following attack against that enemy. You cannot attack the same enemy more than once with this power.
Target: One enemy
Attack: Strength + 7 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the target 1 square and knock it prone.
Miss: Half damage.

Level 16 Utility Exploit

Shield Clamor — Fighter Utility 16

The clanging of your weapon against your shield is a rallying cry for your allies.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Close** burst 5
Requirement: You must be using a shield.
Target: Each enemy in burst you can see
Effect: You mark the target until the end of your next turn. In addition, when the target makes an attack that does not include you as a target before the end of your next turn, you can charge the target as an immediate interrupt. If you hit the target with the attack at the end of the charge, the target also falls prone.

Feats

To provide your fighter character with further shield-based options, consider choosing one of the following feats.

Heroic Tier Feats

The following feats are suitable for any character who meets the prerequisite.

Encouraging Shield

Prerequisite: Fighter

Benefit: Your shield bonus also applies to your Will defense.

Unbalancing Shield Shove

Prerequisite: Fighter

Benefit: When you hit with an opportunity attack while using a shield, the target grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Paragon Tier Feats

Feats in this section are available to any characters of 11th level and above who meet the prerequisites.

Hindering Shield

Prerequisite: 11th level, fighter

Benefit: Whenever you pull, push, or slide a creature with an attack while you are using a shield, you can also slow that creature until the start of your next turn.

Ubiquitous Shield

Prerequisite: 11th level, fighter

Benefit: While you are using a shield, enemies gain no bonus to attack rolls for having combat advantage against you.

Paragon Path

Fighting with multiple shields might appeal to the concept behind your fighter. If so, the following paragon path could help you further customize your character.

Snapping Testudo

"Only one shield? I might as well fight naked!"

Prerequisite: Fighter, proficiency with shields

Both legend and conventional wisdom suggest that dwarves first developed the style of fighting that exchanged a weapon for an extra shield. Being stalwart by nature, they appreciated a tactic that might favor those who stand fast. Being stubborn by nature, they vigorously pursued something counterintuitive until they made it work.

The other races only experimented with the testudo style as tales of the dwarf testudos' exploits began to spread. Today, members of all races can become testudos, but all still study the teachings of those first dwarf masters.

As a snapping testudo you exchange some of your damage potential for extreme defense and greater control of the battlefield. With your awe-inspiring shields and savvy, you force your enemies to fight where you want them to fight, and then cripple them whether or not they oblige.

Snapping Testudo Path Features

Two Shield Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action while using two shields, you gain a +4 bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn.

Two-Fold Defense (11th level): While you are wielding two shields, increase the shield bonus one grants by +1.

Behind the Shell (16th level): When you are in the way of a ranged attack against an ally, that ally has superior cover from your position instead of normal cover.

Snapping Testudo Exploits

Steel Jaws — **Snapping Testudo Attack 11**

With ferocious strength you slam your shields together, crushing opponents between them as though with enormous jaws.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be wielding two shields.
Target: One or two creatures
Attack: Strength + 6 vs. Reflex
Level 21: Strength + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Strength modifier damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Effect: If you hit two targets with this power, slide one 2 squares to a square adjacent to both the other target and to you.

Shielded Aggression — **Snapping Testudo Utility 12**

While safe within your shielded shell, you attack with greater power and strike your foes harder.

Daily ✦ Martial, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Requirement: You must be wielding two shields.
Effect: Until the stance ends, whenever you hit an enemy while using a shield, you can choose to slide the target 1 square or increase by 1 square any forced movement that the attack already grants.

Paddlewheel **Snapping Testudo Attack 20**

You spin through the battlefield like a tornado, using your shields to buffet and reposition foes as you go.

Daily ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Requirement: You must be wielding two shields.
Effect: You shift 2 squares.
Primary Target: One or two creatures
Primary Attack: Strength + 8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the primary target 2 squares and knock the primary target prone.
Miss: Half damage, and you slide the primary target 1 square.
Effect: You shift up to 2 squares and make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: One or two creatures that are not primary targets
Secondary Attack: Strength + 8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the secondary target 2 squares and knock the secondary target prone.

MAGIC ITEMS

The following shield options could be just what you need for your fighter when he or she next heads out on an adventure.

Dragontooth Shield — Level 7

Made to resemble a massive dragon's tooth, this shield can be a deadly weapon.

Lvl 7 2,600 gp
Item Slot: Arms
Shield: Any
Property: This shield is considered a military weapon and can be used as a one-handed melee weapon with +2 proficiency, 1d6 damage, pick, high crit, off-hand. It grants a +2 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls when used as a melee weapon, and it deals 2d12 extra damage on a critical hit.

Fighting Shield — Level 1

This shield quivers on your arm, eager to taste blood with its sharpened edge.

Lvl 1 360 gp
Item Slot: Arms
Shield: Any
Property: This shield is considered a military weapon and can be used as a one-handed melee weapon with +3 proficiency, 1d6 damage, heavy blade, off-hand. It grants a +1 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls when used as a melee weapon, and it deals 1d6 extra damage on a critical hit.

Soul Shield — Level 18

This shield of rough obsidian chills the spirit as well as the flesh.

Lvl 18 85,000 gp
Item Slot: Arms
Shield: Any
Property: This shield is considered a military weapon and can be used as a one-handed melee weapon with +2 proficiency, 1d8 damage, axe, off-hand. It grants a +4 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls when used as a melee weapon, and it deals 4d12 extra damage on a critical hit.

In addition, when you reduce an enemy to 0 hit points with this shield, you gain a +2 power bonus to your next attack roll before the end of your next turn.

Sun Shield — Level 13

This golden disc flares with radiance as you wield it.

Lvl 12 13,000 gp
Item Slot: Arms
Shield: Any
Property: This shield is considered a military weapon and can be used as a one-handed melee weapon with +3 proficiency, 1d6 damage, heavy blade, off-hand. It grants a +3 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls when used as a melee weapon, and it deals 3d12 extra radiant damage on a critical hit.
Power (At-Will ✦ Radiant): Minor Action. The shield sheds bright light within 10 squares, and melee attacks made with the shield deal radiant damage instead of other damage types. You can end this effect as a minor action.

About the Author

This is **Daniel Jones's** first article for *Dragon*® magazine. Now he has a loving and beautiful wife, they're expecting their first child, and he's written for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. Dreams do come true.

Class Acts: Sorcerer

Luckbenders

By Jeff Morgenroth

Illustration by Sarah Stone

All chaos sorcerers tap the Elemental Chaos for their power, but while most use that plane's raw energy to unleash wildly devastating spells, others find subtler applications. For these sorcerers, the entropic forces leaking into the world are not manifested as destructive magic, but as the unseen antithesis of natural laws. They use it to defy probability and undermine reality with formless chaos, bending events to their whims with what appears to be exceedingly good luck.

These chaos sorcerers find ways to win against all odds. With reckless bravado they throw themselves into dangerous situations, trusting in one fortunate coincidence after the next. Many with this devil-may-care attitude find the life of a swashbuckling adventurer appealing, while others approach chaos as a calculated means to accomplish their goals. For them it might be a way to ignore or subvert the limitations of reality—to cheat, even though chaos can never be fully mastered. The greatest paragons of chaos manipulation are the luckbenders, who wander the world playing games against reality with a stacked deck, wagering their lives for glory and thrills.

Are you feeling lucky, sorcerer?

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Playing with Chaos

Your link to the Elemental Chaos is constantly felt in the world around you, manifesting as a near continuous source of good fortune. In reality, you are a living rift between planes, allowing invisible tendrils of chaos to wreak subtle havoc in your environment, but in your favor. Simply put, you bend reality so that you often appear to be in the best place at the best possible time. You might accomplish this by focusing your thoughts towards a specific result, or you might merely remain optimistic that your luck will hold true. Either way, when the forces of chaos take over, you manage to convince them to obey your urges and bend reality to your will.

Heroic Tier Sorcerer Feats

Beginner's Luck

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: Before making an untrained skill check, choose even numbers or odd numbers. If the result of the d20 roll for that skill check matches the kind of number selected, you gain a feat bonus to that skill check equal to your Charisma modifier.

Distracting Coincidences

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: Targets you slide with sorcerer attacks or your Unfettered Power take a -2 penalty to AC until the end of your next turn.

Fortunate Resistance

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: When you roll for your Wild Soul resistance, choose 1–5 or 6–10. If the result of your first die roll is within the range selected, you can choose any result to replace that die roll.

Gambler's Initiative

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: Before rolling an initiative check, choose even numbers or odd numbers. If the result of the d20 roll for that initiative check matches the type of number selected, you gain a feat bonus to that initiative check equal to your Charisma modifier.

Lucky Shot

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: When you use a daily sorcerer attack power or a daily sorcerer paragon path attack power, for one attack roll choose even numbers or odd numbers. If the result of the d20 roll matches the type of number selected, you gain a feat bonus to the damage roll against the target equal to your Charisma modifier for this attack.

Paragon Tier Feats

Coincidental Success

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: Once per encounter when you make a skill check as a part of a skill challenge, choose 1–10 or 11–20. If the result of the d20 roll for that skill check is within the range selected, you automatically earn one success for that skill challenge.

Opportune Chaos Burst

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: When you make your first attack roll each turn, choose odd numbers or even numbers. If you chose odd and the result on the die is an odd number, your Chaos Burst class feature allows you to roll two saving throws against effects that a save can end. If you chose even and the result on the die is an even number, your Chaos Burst class feature grants you a +3 bonus to AC until the start of your next turn.

Unlucky Teleport

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

Benefit: Enemies you teleport with sorcerer powers or with sorcerer paragon path powers or class features take 1d10 psychic damage.

Games of Chance

Although these rules use guessing the results of dice rolls to determine additional effects, a fun alternative might be to use other iconic games of chance. Consider flipping a coin and calling heads or tails, or guessing a draw of red or black from a deck of standard poker cards instead of guessing odd or even or guessing a number range. Incorporate these items into your character's motif to create a memorable gambler persona.

Level 2 Utility Spell

Good Timing — Sorcerer Utility 2

You must have been in the right place at the right time.

Daily ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You miss a target with a sorcerer attack power.
Effect: Reroll the triggering attack roll. If you still miss the target even after the reroll, you take psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier and regain the use of this power at the start of your next turn.

Gambling Siphon — Sorcerer Utility 2

You manipulate the chaos of battle surrounding an ally and transfer some of their luck to you.

Daily ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: An ally within 10 squares makes an attack.
Effect: Before the ally makes his or her first attack roll for the triggering attack, choose 1-10 or 11-20. If the result on the die for the attack roll of the triggering attack is within the range selected, you gain a +5 power bonus to damage rolls until the end of your next turn. Otherwise, you gain a +2 power bonus to damage rolls until the end of your next turn.

Level 6 Utility Spell

Chaos Wager — Sorcerer Utility 6

"Let's take a chance–I've got a good feeling about this one."

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: An ally within 5 squares makes an attack.
Effect: Before the ally makes his or her first attack roll for the triggering attack, choose 1-10 or 11-20. If the result on the die for the attack roll of the triggering attack is within the range selected, you gain a power bonus to damage rolls against that target equal to 5 + your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.

Level 10 Utility Spell

Weave Luck — Sorcerer Utility 10

Chaos intervenes all around, creating good luck for you and misfortune for your enemies.

Daily ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, when you miss an enemy with an attack roll, you gain one of the following benefits: If the result of the die is even, you slide the target 1 square as a free action. If the result on the die is odd, you gain a +2 power bonus to your next attack roll made against that target before the end of your next turn.

Level 16 Utility Spell

Damage Gambit — Sorcerer Utility 16

With high hopes, you trust in chance to empower your attack.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You make a damage roll.
Effect: Reroll the damage roll, and use the new result. If the new result is higher than the triggering damage roll's result, you deal extra damage equal to your Charisma modifier. If the new result is lower, you take psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier.

Level 22 Utility Spell

Fool's Luck — Sorcerer Utility 22

"What can I say? Things just turn out my way."

Daily ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You roll a skill check, ability check, or attack roll and dislike the result.
Effect: Reroll the triggering roll. If you roll a natural 20, you regain the use of this power at the end of your next turn.

Paragon Path: Luckbender

"Never tell me the odds."

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature

As a luckbender, your manipulation of chance is a way of life. You're accustomed to turning failure into success and cheating your way through dangerous situations. As your connection to the Elemental Chaos grows stronger, you can influence chaos in the actions of others, as well as place wagers on your own fate by using attacks and abilities that open up the full potential of chance to intervene on your behalf. With this path, you might make deliberate wagers on the whims of chaos, or swagger with the assured confidence of a master gambler. Either way, luck is on your side.

Luckbender Path Features

Chaos Soul (11th level): When you roll initiative, you can reroll your Wild Soul resistance and keep the new result.

Luckbender's Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to make a sorcerer attack, choose 1-10 or 11-20. If the result on the die for the first attack roll you make as a part of that attack is within the range selected, you regain the use of your lowest-level sorcerer encounter attack power.

Lucky Number (16th level): You score a critical hit with sorcerer and luckbender attack powers on a result of 19-20.

Luckbender Spells

Fortunate Turn of Events Luckbender Attack 11

An enemy's failed attack triggers a welcome, though suspiciously convenient backlash from a nearby hazard.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Varies
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** 10
Trigger: An enemy within 10 squares misses you with an attack
Target: The triggering attacker and each enemy adjacent to it
Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Charisma modifier damage. The damage is of one type you resist with your Wild Soul class feature (if you have multiple resistances from your Wild Soul feature, choose one type). If you rolled an even number on this attack roll, the target is knocked prone. If you rolled an odd number on this attack roll, you slide the target 3 squares.

Even the Odds Luckbender Utility 12

"Real sorcerers make their own luck."

Daily ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Close** burst 5
Trigger: You, an ally, or an enemy in the burst makes an attack roll, skill check, or saving throw.
Effect: Roll 1d6, and either add or subtract the result from the triggering roll.

Just Not Their Day Luckbender Attack 20

You trigger an unending series of painful complications, coincidences, and calamities that strike your enemy simultaneously.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Varies
Standard Action **Ranged 10**
Target: One creature
Effect: Before making the following attack, choose 1-10 or 11-20. If the result on the die for the attack roll is within the range you chose, this attack deals 2d12 extra damage, even on a miss.
Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d12 + Charisma modifier damage and you slide the target 3 squares and knock it prone. The damage is of one type you resist with your Wild Soul class feature (if you have multiple resistances from your Wild Soul feature, choose one type).
Miss: Half damage, and you slide the target 1 square.

Superior Implements

The following new superior implements follow all of the same rules as the superior implements found on page 195 of *Player's Handbook* 3.

Daggers: An accurate dagger is a lean weapon with a very narrow blade, resembling a stiletto. An incendiary dagger features a wavy blade that was forged by tiefling weapon makers using ancient techniques of Bael Turath. A lancing dagger is made of metal drawn from tall mountains and features two jagged edges, giving it the shape of a lightning bolt. A resonating dagger has a thick, wide blade that narrows only slightly as it approaches the tip, and can only be made from the steel of a melted-down warhammer.

Superior implements

Daggers	Price	Weight	Properties
Accurate dagger	25	1	Accurate
Incendiary dagger	22	1	Energized (fire), unerring
Lancing dagger	15	1	Empowered crit, energized (lightning)
Resonating dagger	25	1	Energized (thunder), forceful

About the Author

Lurking in the outskirts of Seattle, **Jeff Morgenroth** has mastered fires of endless academia and the soulless drudgery of the skittering rat-race, at last making his pact with the baleful entities at Wizards of the Coast. He edited a portion of *Monster Manual 2*, and it is prophesized that his name will defile the pages of more books soon.

Class Acts: Swordmage

By Matt James
Illustration by John Stanko

Weaving intricate spells using beauty, the Spellbinders are revered for their dedication and their focus in blending both the martial and arcane arts.

Grand Magiavant Thracius is one of the wisest and most sought-after swordmages in the known world, and he also serves as the leader of a guild of warrior-mages revered by many in the arcane community. His small concordant group, known as the Spellbinders, consists of highly trained and specialized individuals who dedicate themselves to the principles of weaving magic through martial training.

Spellbinders are black sheep in many social circles, having forsaken true dedication to conventional spellcasting by integrating martial disciplines in their studies. However, they are not in any way inferior, as they prove time and time again in their various victories across the known world. Many kings and emperors alike have enlisted the help of the Spellbinders to help sway the tide of battles and ultimately win wars.

Spellbinders come from arcane academies and are chosen from among students that might some might consider to be lacking in spellcasting ability. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many of these youngsters find that the unorthodox training required to be a swordmage suits their styles much better than other training.

Once harvested from the clutches of their traditional life, Spellbinder hopefuls receive training in formal martial arts, utilizing swordplay to enhance their scholarly understanding of magic. Each undergoes a series of trials that serves to instruct the pupil and allow instructors to evaluate the student's progress. A Master Spellbinder, called a Rubicant, carefully watches over each pupil and guides him or her on a path of pure balance. Once they have mastered each of the trials, seven in total, they receive a special weapon upon graduation that serves as much as an award as it does a functional tool for their profession.

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Spells

The following spells can provide swordmages with further options that help draw the Spellbinders into your game.

Level 1 Daily Spell

Blade of Judgment Swordmage Attack 1

You pour arcane energy into improving your aegis.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Lightning, Teleportation, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Melee** weapon
Trigger: An ally within 5 squares of you is hit by an enemy you have marked
Target: The triggering enemy
Effect: You teleport the target to a square adjacent to you and make the following attack.
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier damage, and the target takes 5 ongoing lightning damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target takes 5 extra lightning damage.

Level 2 Utility Spell

Spellbinder's Gift Swordmage Utility 2

A ring of magical energy washes out from you, clinging to your allies' weapons.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Varies
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Target: Each weapon you or an ally is wielding in burst
Effect: Choose fire, cold, lightning, or force. The targeted weapon deals this kind of damage until the end of your next turn.
Sustain Minor: The effect persists until the end of your next turn.

Level 7 Encounter Spell

Evoker's Summoning Swordmage Attack 7

You summon a foe to your side, lashing out against it.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement, Teleportation
Standard Action **Close** burst 3
Target: One enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you can teleport the target to a square adjacent to you.

Level 13 Encounter Spell

Enervating Challenge Swordmage Attack 13

You call forth to your foe, chastising it for its impertinence.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Cold, Implement, Teleportation
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Target: One enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence cold damage. You weaken the target until the start of your next turn and can teleport the target to a square adjacent to you.

Level 15 Daily Spell

Rubicant's Assault Swordmage Attack 15

Ancient words resonate around you as your blade relentlessly assaults your opposition.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Cold, Fire, Teleportation, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Effect: You can teleport 5 squares.
Primary Target: Each enemy adjacent to you that you can see
Primary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier fire damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You can teleport 5 squares and make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: One enemy other than a primary target
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the secondary target is dazed (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.

Level 16 Utility Spell

Elemental Barrier Swordmage Utility 16

You create a barrier of protection for you and your allies.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Zone
Minor Action **Close** burst 2
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. While in the zone, you and each ally gain resistance to fire, cold, and lightning damage equal to your twice your Intelligence modifier.

Level 17 Encounter Spell

Elemental Detention — Swordmage Attack 17

The lightning dancing on your blade leaps to your foe and holds it in place.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Lightning, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier lightning damage, and the target is restrained until the end of your next turn.

Level 27 Encounter Spell

Calm the Flames — Swordmage Attack 27

You cool your enemies' ardor for battle by drawing the heat from their bodies.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Cold, Implement
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d10 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is slowed and dazed until the end of your next turn.

Level 29 Daily Spell

Transdimensional Invasion — Swordmage Attack 29

You teleport back and forth across the battlefield, dragging your enemies with you as you go.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Force, Teleportation, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 5
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 5[W] + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you can teleport the target to any square in the burst.
Miss: Half damage, and you can teleport the target to any square in the burst.
Effect: You can teleport to any square in the burst.

Magic Item

This weapon is granted to swordmages who have gone through rubicant training as a Spellbinder.

Rubicant Blade — Level 8+

This beautiful and ornate weapon has seven runes inscribed on the blade and vibrates with power when held.

Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp			

Weapon: Any one-handed weapon
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 per plus
Property: When a power allows you to teleport, you can add 1 square to that distance.
Property: While this weapon is bonded to you with the swordmage Swordbond class feature, any other creature takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls with this weapon.
Power (Daily): Move Action. You can teleport yourself and one or two allies within 5 squares of you up to 5 squares.

About the Author

Matt James is a disabled combat veteran, having earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart from his recent service in the United States Army. When not freelance writing for the Dungeons & Dragons® game, he works on developing his website (http://www.loremaster.org).

Class Acts: Wizard

By Daniel Marthaler
Illustration by William O'Conner

Let others concern themselves with the cheap thrills of flashy pyrotechnics. Together we will walk a path of truer power. What good is a momentary blast of fire when we can call forth a blazing beast from the fiery heart of the Elemental Chaos itself and bind it to our whim? Those with the will and mettle to break a raging demon's spirit find great rewards come with the very real risk to body and soul that accompanies conjuring such creatures. For those without: Professor Fleeney's course on setting things on fire is down the hall and to your right.

—Dwarren Hathford, professor of summoning and conjuration, in an introductory speech to new students

Summoning as wizards know it does not rely on helpful or even friendly beings coming to their aid. Rather, their arcane powers tear dangerous and hostile creatures from the Elemental Chaos and other exotic locations throughout the planes and bind them in a semblance of servitude. This compulsion is powerful, but the summoned creatures struggle endlessly against their eldritch bonds, and their natural inclinations take over if the wizard's attention waivers for long. Many would-be summoners have met their ends at the hands of their own summoned creatures, unable to control that which they called, but the lure such power holds draws ever more to risk themselves in its pursuit.

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A Note on Summoning

All the powers presented here follow the rules for summoning powers found in the *Player's Handbook 2* (page 221), but with a couple of new mechanics included as well.

Symbiosis: Each power includes a symbiosis effect. The symbiosis entry grants you a particular effect for which you gain the benefit as long as the summoned creature is present. Summoned creatures (and their attacks) can never benefit from the symbiosis effects of summoning powers.

Intrinsic Nature: Each of these summoning powers includes an intrinsic nature entry that details what actions the summoned creature takes if you do not give it any other commands. Remember that the creatures you summon are extremely dangerous and might not appreciate being compelled to serve a mortal wizard: When an intrinsic nature refers to a "creature" it includes you and your allies, not just enemies. It might be prudent to keep in mind that a minor action command can be quite useful in both maneuvering your summoned creature (say, with a move or shift) and preventing its intrinsic nature from coming into play.

Level 1 Daily Spells

Summon Dretch — Wizard Attack 1

A nauseating stench and puff of brimstone herald the arrival of a loathsome, drooling dretch.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Small dretch in an unoccupied space within range. The dretch has speed 5. If the dretch is reduced to 0 hit points, creatures adjacent to it take 5 poison damage. You can give the dretch the following special command.

Standard Action: Melee 1; targets one or two creatures; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d6 + Intelligence modifier damage.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the dretch any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks or charges the nearest creature and makes its listed attack (above) in place of a melee basic attack. If it cannot attack or charge, it moves 5 squares toward the nearest creature. In addition, you take 1d6 damage each time you take a standard or move action before the end of your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned dretch is present, each creature you hit with a basic or at-will attack takes 5 damage if it makes an attack before the end of its next turn, after it makes the attack.

Summon Dust Devil — Wizard Attack 1

Loose objects skitter about as the air whips round, coalescing into a whirling elemental.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Small dust devil in an unoccupied space within range. The dust devil has speed 8. You can give the dust devil the following special command.

Standard Action: Close burst 1; targets each creature in burst; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 1d10 + Intelligence modifier damage, and the dust devil slides the target 2 squares.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the dust devil any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks an adjacent creature. If it can't do that, it moves its speed toward the nearest creature. In addition, you fall prone.

Symbiosis: While the summoned dust devil is present, you gain a +2 power bonus to speed and a +4 power bonus to all defenses against opportunity attacks.

Level 5 Daily Spells

Summon Imp — Wizard Attack 5

With a crack and a flash of blood-red light, a tiny winged devil appears, scorpionlike tail held ready.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Poison, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Small imp in an unoccupied space within range. The imp has speed 4, fly 6 (hover), and resist 5 fire. You can give the imp the following special command.

Standard Action: Melee 1; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 1d8 + Intelligence modifier damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). The imp becomes invisible until the start of your next turn.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the imp any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks an adjacent enemy that grants it combat advantage. If it can't do that, it turns invisible and moves its speed to a square adjacent to an enemy. In addition, you grant combat advantage to all enemies until the end of your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned imp is present, you deal 1d6 extra poison damage with attacks when your target grants you combat advantage.

Summon Magma Beast — Wizard Attack 5

Erupting into being with a blast of searing heat comes a magma beast, eager to incinerate your foes.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Fire, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Medium magma beast in an unoccupied space within range. The magma beast has speed 4 (8 while charging) and resist 5 fire. You can give the magma beast the following special command.

Standard Action: Melee 1; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 1d10 + Intelligence modifier fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage and is slowed (save ends both).

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the magma beast any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks an adjacent creature or charges the nearest creature it can charge and makes its listed attack (above) in place of a melee basic attack. Otherwise, it moves its speed toward the nearest enemy. In addition, you are slowed until the end of your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned magma beast is present, you can shift 2 squares as a move action. Each creature that you hit with a basic or at-will attack cannot shift until the end of its next turn.

Level 9 Daily Spells

Summon Hell Hound — Wizard Attack 9

You summon a burning, houndlike creature that bays with the voice of a raging inferno.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Fire, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Medium hell hound in an unoccupied space within range. The hell hound has speed 7 and resist 10 fire. Any creature that enters a square adjacent to it or starts its turn there takes 5 fire damage. You can give the hell hound the following special command.

Standard Action: Close blast 3; targets each creature in blast; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the hell hound any commands by the end of your turn, it makes its attack against at least one enemy, targeting as many creatures as possible. If it can't target any enemies, it moves its speed toward the nearest enemy. In addition, you take 5 fire damage.

Symbiosis: While the summoned hell hound is present, you deal 1d6 extra fire damage with close and area attacks, and each creature that hits you with melee attacks takes 1d6 fire damage.

Summon Succubus — Wizard Attack 9

With a puff of perfumed brimstone, a succubus saunters into the world at your call.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Medium succubus in an unoccupied space within range. The succubus has speed 6, fly 6, and resist 10 fire. You can give the succubus the following special command.

Standard Action: Ranged 5; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Will; 1d10 + Intelligence modifier damage, and the target is dominated until the end of your next turn. Once a creature has been dominated, the target cannot be dominated by the succubus again this encounter.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the succubus any commands by the end of your turn, it shifts 1 square and attacks you or your nearest ally within range.

Symbiosis: While the summoned succubus is present, each creature you hit with a basic or at-will attack takes a –4 penalty to attacks rolls made against you until the end of its next turn.

Level 15 Daily Spells

Summon Stormstone Fury — Wizard Attack 15

A hulking elemental of stone and living thunder answers your summons with a sound akin to cracking rock and rumbling thunder.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Thunder, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Medium stormstone fury in an unoccupied space within range. The stormstone fury has speed 6 and resist 10 thunder. You can give the stormstone fury the following special commands.

Standard Action: Area burst 2 within 10; targets each creature in burst; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 1d12 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage. A target in the origin square of the burst takes 2d8 extra damage if hit.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the stormstone fury any commands by the end of your turn, it makes its attack targeting as many creatures as possible. In addition, you take 5 thunder damage and fall prone.

Symbiosis: While the summoned stormstone fury is present, you deal 2d6 extra thunder damage with area attacks, and each creature in the origin square of your area attacks takes 2d6 thunder damage if you miss.

Summon Vrock — Wizard Attack 15

A foul smelling, feathered demon screeches into being, wicked talons flexing in anticipation of tearing flesh.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Poison, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Large vrock in an unoccupied space within range. The vrock has speed 6 and fly 8. You can give the vrock the following special command.

Standard Action: The vrock moves its fly speed and makes the following attack at one point during the movement; melee 2; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d10 + Intelligence modifier damage. The vrock does not provoke opportunity attacks for this movement from the target of its attack.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the vrock any commands by the end of your turn, it makes its attack against the nearest creature. If it can't reach any targets, it moves its speed toward the nearest creature. In addition, you take10 poison damage and you lose your minor action on your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned vrock is present, you do not provoke opportunity attacks for moving, and you deal 2d6 extra poison damage with attacks that stun or daze targets.

Level 19 Daily Spells

Summon Couatl — Wizard Attack 19

An ancient incantation summons a benevolent, winged, snakelike couatl to your aid.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Lightning, Radiant, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Large couatl in an unoccupied space within range. The couatl has speed 6, fly 8 (hover), and is immune to being immobilized or restrained. You can give the couatl the following special command.

Standard Action: Ranged 20; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d10 + Intelligence modifier lightning and radiant damage, or 3d10 + Intelligence modifier lightning and radiant damage against demons.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the couatl any commands by the end of your turn, it shifts 1 square and attacks the nearest creature within range. In addition, you take 10 radiant damage and the couatl pushes you 2 squares.

Symbiosis: While the summoned couatl is present, if you take radiant damage from a creature other than the couatl you summoned, your attacks deal 2d6 extra radiant damage until the end of your next turn. Additionally, you make saving throws against immobilized and restrained conditions at the start of your turn as well as at the end of your turn.

Summon Rockfire Dreadnought — Wizard Attack 19

You summon a durable elemental minion from a fiery region of the Elemental Chaos.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Fire, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Large rockfire dreadnought in an unoccupied space within range. The rockfire dreadnought has speed 8, a +2 bonus to AC, and resist 10 fire. Any creature that enters a square adjacent to it or starts its turn there takes 10 fire damage. You can give the rockfire dreadnought the following special command.

Standard Action: Melee 2; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d10 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the rockfire dreadnought any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks the nearest enemy within its reach. If no enemies are within its reach, it attacks the nearest creature within reach of it. Otherwise it moves its speed toward the nearest enemy. In addition, you take 10 fire damage and take a –2 penalty to AC until the end of your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned rockfire dreadnought is present, you gain a +2 power bonus to AC and each creature that hits you with a melee attack takes 5 fire damage.

Level 25 Daily Spells

Summon Earthwind Ravager — Wizard Attack 25

Punishing winds blast outward as a churning creature of stone and whipping air bursts into being.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Large earthwind ravager in an unoccupied space within range. The ravager has fly 8 (hover). You can give the earthwind ravager the following special command.

Standard Action: Ranged 5; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + Intelligence modifier damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the earthwind ravager's next turn.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the earthwind ravager any commands by the end of your turn, it shifts 1 square and attacks the creature it attacked last. If it can't attack the creature it attacked last, it attacks the nearest creature within range. In addition, you take 10 damage and you are immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned earthwind ravager is present, when you hit a target with a basic or at-will attack, you push the target 2 squares. Additionally, each enemy that starts its turn immobilized, restrained, or slowed by you takes 2d8 damage.

Summon Marilith — Wizard Attack 25

Bleeding gashes in the air appear as a many-armed demon slashes its way into reality at your summons.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Large marilith in an unoccupied space within range. The marilith has speed 8. You can give the marilith the following special command.

Standard Action: The marilith makes three of the following attacks: Melee 2; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d10 + Intelligence modifier damage (3d10 + Intelligence modifier damage against bloodied creatures), and the marilith shifts 2 squares.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the marilith any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks the nearest enemy within its reach, or the nearest creature within its reach if no enemies are within its reach, using its listed attack (above). If no enemies are within its reach, it moves its speed toward the nearest enemy. In addition, you take15 damage (20 if you are bloodied).

Symbiosis: While the summoned marilith is present, you can shift 1 square whenever you hit with a basic or at-will attack. Additionally, when an adjacent enemy misses you with a melee attack, you can make a basic or at-will attack that includes that enemy as a target as an opportunity action. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Level 29 Daily Spells

Summon Balor — Wizard Attack 29

The very air screams as if in pain and the ground cracks and blackens as reality struggles against the emergence of the terrible fiend called forth by your magic.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Fire, Implement, Lightning, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Huge balor in an unoccupied space within range. The balor has a speed of 8, a fly speed of 12 (clumsy), resist 25 fire, and creatures that start their turns within 2 squares of the balor take 10 fire damage. You can give the balor the following special command.

Standard Action: Melee 5; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 4d10 + Intelligence modifier fire and lightning damage, and the balor slides the target 5 squares into an unoccupied space adjacent to the balor.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the balor any commands by the end of your turn, it attacks the nearest creature within its reach. If there are no creatures within its reach it moves its speed toward the nearest enemy. Additionally, if you are within its reach, the balor makes its melee attack against you.

Symbiosis: While the summoned balor is present, each creature that hits you with melee attacks take 10 fire damage, and you deal 15 extra fire and lightning damage with basic, at-will, and encounter powers.

Summon Djinn Stormcaller — Wizard Attack 29

A peal of thunder sounds as a whirling storm cloud explodes into being, a resplendent, pale-skinned humanoid visible within it.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Lightning, Summoning, Thunder
Minor Action **Ranged** 10

Effect: You summon a Large djinn in an unoccupied space within range. The djinn has speed 6, fly 8 (hover), and resist 15 thunder. You can give the djinn the following special command.

Standard Action: Close burst 2; targets creatures in burst; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 3d10 + Intelligence modifier lightning and thunder damage. *Effect:* The djinn slides the target 3 squares.

Intrinsic Nature: If you haven't given the djinn any commands by the end of your turn, it shifts its speed and makes its attack, trying to catch as many creatures in the burst as possible. In addition, you take 10 thunder damage, fall prone, and are restrained until the end of your next turn.

Symbiosis: While the summoned djinn stormcaller is present, gain fly speed 8 (hover), and you can teleport 3 squares either before or after you make a basic or at-will attack as a free action. Powers you use that push or pull targets instead slide them an equal number of squares.

About the Author

Daniel Marthaler is an avid gamer with soaring delusions of grandeur and dreams of breaking into the industry. Despite being 6' 3", he has a peculiar love of the wee races that populate the game, most notably the gnomes and kobolds.

Winning Races: Deva

By Rodney Thompson
Illustration by Sarah Stone & Eva Widermann

Unlike other races, devas have a skewed perspective on concepts such as mortality and legacy. Devas do not die and pass into the realm of the dead like other races. Instead, they become bodiless spirits that inhabit the spirit realm of the world, drifting for years in a dreaming state, only to be reborn again in an adult deva body. Wicked devas are reborn as rakshasas, and many believe that redeemed rakshasas are reborn as devas.

The following two epic destinies touch on many of the concepts of immortality and rebirth that make the deva so unique. The first, the disincarnate, is good for characters who want to experiment with the ideas of rebirth as a rakshasa and the renewal of life as a deva. The latter, the soul of the world, focuses on the concept of reincarnation and shows what happens when a reincarnated spirit is reborn in the body of a deva.

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Disincarnate

The time of your death and rebirth is upon you, but whether you return as a deva or as a rakshasa has yet to be determined.

Prerequisite: 21st level, deva, *memory of a thousand lifetimes* power

Death holds few mysteries for the devas, who know—for a fact—that a new life waits for them beyond death. However, uncertainty comes in the form of the question of whether the deva is reborn as a deva, or as a rakshasa, depending on the wickedness of the deva's life. Many devas believe that being affected by curses or dying particularly vile deaths can corrupt their souls, transforming the most benevolent deva into a rakshasa in his or her next life.

You, however, have broken through the barriers of knowledge to peer into the future of your disincarnation, the time when you become a bodiless entity drifting through the spirit realm. You know that death is soon to be upon you, but not before you have attained your destiny. You have already mastered the power bestowed upon your soul as a disincarnate, and you can wield those powers while you yet live. For you, disincarnation holds no uncertainty, because you know that you can forge your next life with your actions in this one.

Having already tapped into the same mystical power that bestows constant rebirth upon your soul, you can call upon abilities granted only to disincarnated deva spirits and rakshasas, becoming more than who you are and, instead, becoming a manifestation of who you might yet be. You have reached into the mystical afterlife waiting for all devas and drawn back a fragment of the power that makes such miracles possible. You see not just your own future, but many possible futures, and you can alter the winds of fortune to guarantee the reincarnation you seek.

Immortality

You live half in the present, and half in the future as a disincarnated spirit. As the present catches up to the future, you draw closer to the fate that you have forged.

Destined Rebirth: In the days, weeks, and months leading up to the completion of your Destiny Quest, you wield powers that are supposed to be possessed only by devas in their spiritual state. As you do so, you steer yourself toward your own eventual rebirth, either by using those powers for good deeds, or for wicked.

When you have at last achieved that which you were destined to do, you know that you can finally shed your current form and move on to the afterlife you have forged. As all devas do, you relieve your spirit of your body, but unlike other devas you spend no time in a state of bodiless dreaming between lives. Each time you die, you are reborn instantly in the form that you chose (either as a deva, or as a rakshasa), full of the knowledge that you gained during your last life. Each time you die, the wheel of fate spins you out into the world, in a form chosen by you, and with the ability to wield the powers that bestow the miraculous reincarnation upon your race.

Disincarnate Features

Certain Destiny (21st level): You increase your Wisdom score by 2, and you choose one other ability score to increase by 2.

Deceptive Veil (21st level): You gain the *deceptive veil* power.

Deceptive Veil — **Disincarnate Feature**

You weave an illusion over yourself that shields your true identity from others.

At-Will ✦ Illusion
Minor Action **Personal**

Effect: You disguise yourself to appear as any Medium humanoid. Your clothing and equipment alter appearance to reflect this change. The illusion does not alter sound or texture, so a creature listening to you or touching you might detect the illusion. A creature can see through the disguise with a successful Insight check versus the your Bluff check.

Fate Manipulation (21st level): When an enemy within 10 squares of you makes an attack roll, skill check, ability check, or saving throw, you can expend your *memory of a thousand lifetimes* power as a free action to subtract the same die type you would roll for that power from the triggering check.

Bodiless Dreaming (24th level): Once per day when you die, you return to the world as a bodiless disincarnation of your former self. You regain hit points equal to your bloodied value, your old body dis-

perses into motes of light, and you appear as a spectral force floating over the battlefield in the square where you died. Until your next short rest, you are insubstantial, you have phasing and a fly speed equal to your speed (you can hover, but have a maximum altitude of 2 squares), and when you use your *memory of a thousand lifetimes* power you roll 2 dice instead of 1, using either result. After you take a short rest, you appear in your new body in a flash of radiant light.

Fate of the Fallen Star (30th level): You become immune to radiant and necrotic damage. Additionally, when you make a death saving throw, you can choose any result for your d20 roll.

Disincarnate Power

Rakshasa Incarnation Disincarnate Utility 26

For a moment, you give in to the darker side of your disincarnation and transform into a rakshasa, your potential future self.

Daily ✦ Polymorph
Minor Action **Personal**

Effect: You take on the form of a rakshasa until the end of the encounter. While in this form, your unarmed attacks have a +3 proficiency bonus and a +6 enhancement bonus, have d10 damage die, are treated as a high crit weapon, and deal +5d6 damage on a critical hit. You gain low-light vision while in this form.

Additionally, while in this form you can make the following at-will attack:

Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom +9 vs. Will
Hit: The target takes a free action to make an at-will attack of your choice against a creature of your choice. This action does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Soul of the World

You have lived a thousand lifetimes, but not all of them as a deva. Your soul has wandered the planes in many bodies, and you have learned to unlock your knowledge of those past lives and livelihoods.

Prerequisite: 21st level, deva

The soul of a deva is reborn each time it dies, leaving the deva with relatively fresh memories from past lifetimes. However, some spirits are reincarnated over and over again throughout the centuries, each as different races and with different professions. When one of these reincarnating spirits is reborn as a deva, it creates an unusual situation where the deva can recall past lives beyond those recalled by most devas.

You are one of these few who can cast their thoughts far back in time, calling upon memories of lives as humans, elves, dwarves, and other races. You might have memories of life as a dragonborn warrior defending the walls of an Arkhosian fortress, and maybe you recall the First Days when you and your fellow elves first walked the forests of the world. You remember being among the dwarf crafters as you laid the foundation for the first buildings in Hammerfast, and the taste of bitter betrayal as you stood with your fellow tieflings in the ashes of Bael Turath.

You have an uncanny sense of time unlike that possessed by your fellow devas. Also, unlike other devas, you cannot say for certain that you will be reborn again with the knowledge of your past lives, and you must seize this rare chance to make use of the memories you possess. With knowledge of the world from the dawn of time, you have a chance to see the greater picture and gain the kind of scope you need to make history-altering changes that frequently remain only within the domain of gods.

Immortality

The knowledge of life as many different people, ranging all the way back to the earliest days of the most ancient races, informs your perspective and reminds you that memories, knowledge, and skills still live on deep in the minds of others.

Immortal World Walker: As you draw closer to the completion of your Destiny Quest, more and more memories begin to flood your mind from lives both recent and ancient. As the memories threaten to overwhelm your own personality, you learn to harness their knowledge and perform miracles that you would not have normally thought you could achieve.

When you have embraced your destiny, you fully merge with the memories of your past lives; no longer do they surface from time to time, but you call upon them at will, as though you had experienced all they had to offer in this lifetime. You transcend who you are, becoming, instead, an amalgamation of everyone

you have ever been. This transformation permeates every fiber of your being, including your physical form, and you cease to be troubled by mortal concerns such as aging or a natural death. You have walked the world from its most ancient days, and continue to do so, full of memories dating back to the first days of creation.

Soul of the World Features

Past Spirit (21st level): Choose a race other than your own. You are considered a member of that race for the purpose of meeting feat prerequisites. If that race has any racial encounter powers, you gain one of your choice.

At 24th level, you choose a second race and gain the same benefits with it.

Strengthened by the Past (21st level): You increase your Intelligence and your Wisdom scores by 2.

Knowledge of Ancient Lives (24th level): Choose any class. You can choose a power from this class or your class any time you gain a new class power or retrain a class power.

One with All Past Lives (30th level): During a short rest, you can swap any one of your encounter attack powers for any encounter attack power of the same level from any other class. This swap lasts until your next short rest. You can have only one of your powers swapped out in this manner at a time.

Soul of the World Power

Past Life Manifestation — Soul of the World Utility 26

You reach back into the past, summoning your former self to replace you for a time.

Daily
No Action **Personal**
Trigger: You drop to 0 hit points or fewer
Effect: You regain hit points equal to your bloodied value.
Choose any race and class. You change your form to appear as a member of that race and class and gain one of that race's racial encounter powers, if any, and one of the chosen class's level 22 utility powers until the end of your next extended rest.
Additionally, you can use *memory of a thousand lifetimes* an additional time this encounter.

About the Author

Rodney Thompson is an RPG developer and designer at Wizards of the Coast. Originally from Chattanooga, TN, his credits for the Dungeons & Dragons game include the *Eberron Campaign Guide* and *Martial Power II*, and he is the lead developer for the Dark Sun campaign setting books. Rodney is also the lead designer and developer of all of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Saga Edition books.

Winning Races:
Fighting Styles of the Valenar

By Craig Bishell
Illustration by Alexey Aparin

The thunder of charging hooves, the flash of whirling scimitar blades, and entreaties to emulate the deeds of revered ancestors are the sounds and images that spring to mind when one talks of the elves of Valenar. The martial traditions of the Valenar elves are founded on three pillars: mastery of curved blades, fighting from the back of specially bred horses, and upholding the honor of past heroes.

Mastery of curved blades traditionally covers the double scimitar, scimitar, and falchion as demonstrated by the Valenar Weapon Training feat (see below). Although this feat covers three weapons, typically your character should specialize with one that matches his or her class and concept. Those favoring two-handed weapons, such as avengers, barbarians, and fighters with the two-handed weapon talent and battlerager fighter class features, prefer the falchion. Classes favoring fighting with a main and offhand weapon, such as fighters with the tempest fighter class feature or rangers with the double scimitar fighting style feat (see below), prefer the double scimitar. Finally, classes who wish to keep a hand free to carry a shield or implement, such as fighters with the one-handed weapon talent, paladins, swordmages—at least those without the Valenar Weapon Warding feat (see below)—warlords and wardens, prefer to wield a scimitar.

Regardless of the specific weapon you favor, Valenar swordplay flows and takes advantage of superior elven speed and accuracy. Valenar elves can frustrate enemies by making heavy use of their racial ability to shift into or through difficult terrain, maneuver opponents into corners, or strike and then retreat to a position of safety. To capture the feel of a Valenar elf, you should choose feats and powers that build upon these racial strengths, such as Defensive Mobility, Elven Precision, Evasion, Flanking Maneuver, Scimitar Dance, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Flurry, Uncanny Dodge, Unfettered Stride, Weapon Expertise, and Weapon Focus.

No finer breed of horse can be found across Eberron than the Valenar warhorse, which shares the elven traits of speed and maneuverability. Although some elves use the same weapons from horseback as on foot, many prefer weapons that are less cumbersome and that extend their threat range against enemies. Those favoring ranged weapons, such as

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rangers and some warlords and bards, prefer the shortbow. Defense-minded characters who can use one-handed weapons, such as wardens, paladins, warlords, and fighters, prefer shield and javelin or spear. Characters aiming for maximum damage potential, such as fighters using two-handed weapons and barbarians stick to a longspear or other polearm. One rarely sees an avenger or swordmage on horseback, since the mount is usually incompatible with their various shifts and teleports around the battlefield.

A Valenar and his or her horse behave together much the same as an elf on foot—albeit over a greater area—using superior speed and maneuverability to strike hard and fast and then withdraw from reprisals to a safe distance or location. They look to move around blocking enemies or terrain and strike at the heart of opponents' lines, where they threaten leaders and artillery while leaving the rank-and-file soldiers for allies to handle. When facing solos or large brutes, they prefer to use their range and maneuverability to set up flanking attacks with allies. As well as the Mounted Combat feat, you should choose feats and powers that increase your ability to move around opponents and strike with a devastating mounted charge, such as Fast Runner, Fleet-Footed, Long Jumper, Power Attack, Powerful Charge, Spear Push, and Swift Rider (see below).

The history of the Valenar is one of warfare—the uprising against the giants of Xen'drik, clashes with the Dhakaani goblins when they arrived on Khorvaire, fighting for (and against) Cyre during the Last War, constant skirmishes with Karrnathi forces and the horrors of the Mournland since the end of the war. Even during times when they have no external threats against which to prove themselves, the warclans fight among themselves for honor and prestige. This warfare is a product of the Valenar belief that their ancestors live on through the deeds done by their descendants in the current age. A Valenar who is truly worthy can become infused with the spirit of his or her patron ancestor to transform into a living avatar who strives to perform deeds worthy of that ancestor's memory.

Characters who draw upon the spirits of the past to augment their prowess in battle should focus on powers of assistance and inspiration for companions. If not already a leader class, a leader multiclass feat is a good choice—typically into bard, shaman, warlord, or cleric—as are feats that augment your companions and build on abilities granted by a leader class, such as Ancestral Guidance, Combat Medic, Improved Majestic Word, Inspired Recovery, and Spirit Speaker.

Although the three aspects above are the main pillars of Valenar warfare, they are not the totality of the tactics and abilities employed by their warriors. They make heavy use of arcane, primal, and divine magic. At least one wizard, sorcerer, bard, druid, shaman, invoker, or cleric accompanies a warband and seamlessly blends his or her mastery of magic with that of his or her clan's mastery of blade, beast, and bow.

Feats

Heroic Tier Feats

Light-Footed Warrior

Prerequisite: Elf, fighter

Benefit: When you use a fighter attack power that allows you to move, you ignore difficult terrain during that movement.

Valenar Feats

To increase utility for all campaigns, most of the feats in this article are not restricted to Valenar characters. Dungeon Masters running an Eberron® campaign could include an additional prerequisite of Valenar background for any or all the options in this article, since these abilities are not typically found among the elves of Aerenal.

Roar of the Ancestors

Prerequisite: Elf, barbarian, trained in Intimidate

Benefit: When you hit an enemy with a barbarian fear attack power, you can push the target 1 square in addition to any effects of the attack.

Valenar Rider Training

Prerequisite: Elf

Benefit: You gain proficiency with all simple and military spears, plus a +2 feat bonus to damage rolls with shortbows and all simple and military spears while you are riding a mount. The bonus increases to +3 at 11th level and +4 at 21st level.

In addition, you can use your *elven accuracy* racial power to reroll an attack roll your mount makes.

Valenar Weapon Training

Prerequisite: Elf

Benefit: You gain proficiency and a +2 feat bonus to damage rolls with scimitars, double scimitars, and falchions. The bonus increases to +3 at 11th level and +4 at 21st level.

Valenar Weapon Warding

Prerequisite: Elf, swordmage, Swordmage Warding class feature

Benefit: You increase the AC bonus provided by your Swordmage Warding to +2 while you are wielding a double scimitar or a falchion.

Wild Grasp

Prerequisite: Elf, warden, *warden's grasp* class feature

Benefit: When you use *warden's grasp*, you can pull the target 3 squares instead of sliding it. If the target is a giant or goblin, the target is also slowed until the end of its next turn.

Word of the Ancestors

Prerequisite: Elf, warlord, *inspiring word* class feature

Benefit: When you use *inspiring word*, the target regains additional hit points equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Traditional Enemies

In Eberron, the traditional enemies fought by the ancestors of the Valenar elves are the giants of Xen'drik and the Dhakaani goblinoids. These enemies are reflected in the Keeper of the Past paragon path. A Dungeon Master wishing to use this material in other campaign settings could change these traditional enemy types to creatures with other keywords and origins.

Paragon Tier Feats

Ancestral Battle Accuracy

Prerequisite: 11th level, elf

Benefit: You can use your *elven accuracy* racial power to reroll the attack rolls of a single close or area weapon attack power against every target you choose while wielding a scimitar, double scimitar, falchion, shortbow or spear.

Elven Resilience

Prerequisite: 11th level, elf

Benefit: When you use your *elven accuracy* racial power to reroll an attack roll and hit, you gain a +2 bonus to Will and saving throws until the start of your next turn.

Swift Rider

Prerequisite: 11th level, elf, Mounted Combat feat

Benefit: You gain a +1 feat bonus to your speed and a +2 feat bonus to the speed of any mount you are riding.

Valenar Dervish Style

The warriors of the Valenar fight with blinding speed while using a scimitar or double scimitar, and they do so both on and off their mounts. Their nimbleness is a skill learned from generations of history fighting lumbering giants, where a single solid blow means the end of a brave Valenar warrior. A Valenar warrior practicing this style might be confused by the unenlightened as practicing a particularly intricate dance.

Valenar Dervish Student

Prerequisite: Elf, fighter or ranger, proficiency with scimitar or double scimitar

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Acrobatics checks.

When you are attacking with a scimitar or a double scimitar and you have proficiency with that weapon, you also gain the following benefit.

When you hit or miss an enemy with a power associated with this feat, you can shift 1 square.

Associated Powers: *dual strike, marauder's rush*

Valenar Dervish Stalwart

Prerequisite: Elf, fighter, Valenar Dervish Student feat

Benefit: When you are attacking with a scimitar or a double scimitar and you have proficiency with that weapon, you gain the following two benefits.

After resolving a martial encounter attack power, you can shift 2 squares, then slide one target you hit with that attack 2 squares to a square adjacent to you.

When you hit an enemy with a power associated with this feat, instead of pushing the enemy, you can slide the enemy the same distance. If the power already allows you to slide the enemy, you can slide it 1 additional square.

Level	Associated Encounter Power	Source
3rd	Sweeping Slash	*Martial Power 2*, page 10
7th	Twofold Torment	*Martial Power*, page 12
13th	Scattering Swing	*Martial Power*, page 15
17th	Vorpal Tornado	*Player's Handbook*, page 83
23rd	Weaponmaster's Lure	*Martial Power*, page 20

Valenar Dervish Whirlwind

Prerequisite: Elf, ranger, Valenar Dervish Student feat

Benefit: When you are attacking with a scimitar or a double scimitar and you have proficiency with that weapon, you the following two benefits.

When you hit an enemy with a martial encounter power, you can shift 1 square to a square adjacent to the enemy, then push the enemy 1 square.

When you hit an enemy with a power associated with this feat, you can shift 3 squares to a square adjacent to the enemy.

Level	Associated Encounter Power	Source
3rd	Leonine Surge	*Martial Power*, page 46
7th	Assess and Strike	*Martial Power 2*, page 37
13th	Nimble Defense	*Player's Handbook*, page 109
17th	Two-Weapon Eviscerate	*Player's Handbook*, page 111
23rd	Flickering Blades	*Martial Power 2*, page 43
27th	Steel Breeze	*Martial Power 2*, page 44

Paragon Path

Keeper of the Past

"My patron ancestor speaks through me, and her words do not bode well for you."

Prerequisite: Elf; bard, shaman, or warlord; must worship the Spirits of the Past

At the birth of every Valenar child, a Keeper of the Past is present to determine the ancestor spirit destined to guide that individual through life. At the end of every Valenar life, a Keeper of the Past judges the deeds of the deceased and ensures that particularly worthy elves are immortalized in history. In this way the Keepers of the Past lead the Valenar from the day of their birth until the day of their death. No matter the power they wield, all Keepers worship and draw upon the power of revered patron ancestors, known collectively as the Spirits of the Past. The key difference between them is not their power source so much as they way in which they draw upon that power. Shamans tend to have a personal connection with a patron ancestor (the shaman is often a direct descendant). Warlords lead by example—putting the advice imparted by ancestor spirits into practice on the battlefield. Bards inspire those around them to emulate the greatest deeds of ancient heroes. Regardless of the exact means by which you do it, as a Keeper of the Past you commune with and channel the advice, guidance, and sometimes direct power of the Spirits of the Past.

Keeper of the Past Path Features

Ancient Enemies (11th level): You gain a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier to monster knowledge checks made regarding giants and goblins. You also gain the ability to speak, read, and write the Giant and Goblin languages fluently.

Inspirational Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, each ally who can see and hear you gains a +4 power bonus to speed until the start of your next turn.

Inspirational Practice (11th level): When you hit an enemy with an encounter or daily power, that enemy grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Ancestral Retribution (16th level): Whenever an enemy saves against an effect from one of your daily attack powers, that enemy takes ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).

Keeper of the Past Powers

Retributive Strike Keeper of the Past Attack 11

Your patron ancestor fills you with righteous anger at an opponent who has harmed you or an ally.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Melee** weapon
Trigger: An enemy within your reach hits you or an ally adjacent to you
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Charisma, Strength, or Wisdom modifier vs. Will
Hit: 1[W] + Charisma, Strength, or Wisdom modifier damage, and you and your allies gain a power bonus to melee damage rolls against the target equal to your Intelligence modifier until the end of your next turn.

Ancestral Avatar Keeper of the Past Utility 12

You call upon one of a cabal of patron spirits for advice.

Daily ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose an ancestral spirit to channel and gain the bonuses associated with that ancestral spirit until the end of your next turn.
Sword Patron: You gain a +2 power bonus to attack rolls with melee and close weapon attacks.
Archer Patron: You gain a +2 power bonus to attack rolls with ranged attacks, and your ranged attacks ignore the -2 penalty to attack rolls from cover.
Steed Patron: You gain a +4 power bonus to speed, and any ally that starts its turn within 3 squares of you gains a +4 power bonus to speed until the end of his or her turn.
Arcane Patron: You gain a +2 power bonus to attack rolls with close and area implement attacks.
Wise Patron: You gain a +3 power bonus to skill checks.
Sustain Minor: The effect persists.

Storm of the Ancestors Keeper of the Past Attack 20

A swirling storm of ancestral spirits buffets your enemies and shields you and your companions from their view.

Daily ✦ Primal, Psychic
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Charisma, Strength, or Wisdom + 9 vs. Will
Hit: 4d8 + Charisma, Strength, or Wisdom modifier psychic damage.
Effect: You gain concealment until the end of your next turn, and until the end of your next turn your allies have concealment while adjacent to you.
Sustain Minor: The effect persists.

About the Author

Craig hails from the far off land of kiwis, conchords, and large men dressed in black: New Zealand. Although he's been playing the Dungeons & Dragons® game for a number of years, this marks only his second foray into writing content for the game (after contributing to The Liber Beastarius from Eden Studios). When he isn't writing or gaming he spends his time watching rugby and cricket, the two most popular sports of his homeland.

Winning Races: Half-Elves

By James Auwaerter
Illustration by Eva Widermann

Lia assessed the battlefield as the fight raged on around her. The magebred had pushed them hard and were trying to pin them against the walled ruins. She was out of healing infusions, and Graven looked tapped as well. They needed a chance to regroup.

"Over there!" she shouted, moving through a nearby doorway. They followed—first Graven, then Brandwin, and finally Jaem, who stood to bar the way. His eyes flashed black, and she shuddered. Too ready to sacrifice himself.

"Get out of the way!" she said as she lifted her hand. When he stepped back, a pillar of lightning rose in front of him.

"That's not one of your infusions," Jaem said as he took a breath and readied himself for the spell's end.

"No," she replied, "it isn't."

Half-elves have a well-deserved reputation for their versatility. Just when you think you know everything a half-elf can do, out comes another surprise. They might lack the depth of knowledge that others have, but their breadth is unparalleled. Many have tried to figure out what drives them to dabble. Some human scholars believe that the half-elves' proclivity to learn a variety of skills has something to do with their life-long health. A half-elf of 50 years remains as vital as a human half his or her age, while humans have to prepare for their bodies growing weak with age. Elves believe that half-elves try to fit an elven lifetime of experiences into a time half as short. For their part, half-elves ask why they should spend their lives doing a single thing. Even if they enjoy what they do, what's to say that something else won't be more interesting?

Due to their dabbling, half-elves can also make surprising connections by integrating their knowledge across different fields into something that no one else had seen before. Half-elves take credit for creating the first songblades and songbows, and some also take credit for the first pact blades, depending on the general opinion on warlocks within their society.

With their potentially broad range of abilities, half-elf adventurers remain a breed apart. All of them have a trick that they've picked up from another class, and many balance out their capabilities by multiclassing or hybrid classing. The most obvious examples of this predilection are half-elf bards, who can take on the role of nearly any class. The Combat

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Virtuoso feat allows them to take any power for their Dilettante racial trait and use it effectively, as well as make good use of the power swap multiclass feats.

Half-elf warlocks almost multiclass within their class by taking powers from different pacts to gain a variety of effects. These warlocks can expand their repertoires with the Twofold Pact feat at first opportunity, pledging themselves to two arcane masters for more power and more varied effects. Thanks to their race's toughness and charm, they can make any pact equally well, from pledging to the fey to making deals with vestiges of mostly forgotten powers.

Other classes have a harder time taking advantage of a half-elf's bonuses to Charisma and Constitution, but many of them offer better options for multiclassing and also provide powers for use with Dilettante. Most martial classes make use of Strength, and many divine and primal classes use Wisdom for their attacks. If a half-elf becomes a barbarian, he or she can take Righteous Brand or Wolf Pack Tactics as his or her power with Dilettante and make good use of it.

Half-Elven Selflessness

A half-elf's genuine love for working with other people manifests in many ways. Half-elf adventurers work more closely with their allies than members of other races do. For example, each half-elf tries to find ways to assist his or her allies such as by showing them how to play off his or her specific strengths. Additionally, each remembers that the group has an overriding goal of some sort to achieve. With this goal in mind, half-elves frequently put a lot of their efforts into strengthening others so that the group as a whole can achieve a goal.

Many half-elves learn extra languages or pick up tricks to communicate with other people. The act of learning the language provides insights into its culture, and it allows a meaningful exchange of ideas between the half-elf and other people. With their natural proclivity toward diplomacy, half-elves can represent the group to others.

With some of the options offered below, a half-elf can enhance his or her natural penchant to dabble with another class's powers or expand his or her capacity for selflessness.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Adept Dilettante [Multiclass]

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Benefit: You can use your Constitution, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier to determine bonuses to attack rolls and damage rolls with the power you chose for your Dilettante racial trait instead of the ability modifier that power normally uses.

Special: This feat counts as a class-specific multiclass feat for the class from which your Dilettante racial trait power comes.

Bolstering Touch

Prerequisite: Half-elf, paladin, *lay on hands* power

Benefit: When you use *lay on hands* on an ally, the target can regain hit points equal to your healing surge value rather than his or her own healing surge value.

Defending Dabbler

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Benefit: When you hit with the power you gained from your Dilettante racial trait, you can mark the target until the end of your next turn.

Defensive Wrath

Prerequisite: Half-elf, invoker, *armor of wrath* power

Benefit: You can use *armor of wrath* when an enemy within 5 squares of you hits one of your allies with an attack.

Effortless Dilettante

Prerequisite: Half-elf, you must have chosen a melee attack power for your Dilettante racial trait

Benefit: Once per encounter, you can use the power you chose for your Dilettante racial trait as a melee basic attack against a single target as a part of a charge or opportunity attack.

Group Vigor

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Benefit: When one of your allies within 10 squares of you spends a healing surge to regain hit points, he or she regains 1 additional hit point. The additional hit points gained increase to 2 at 11th level, and 3 at 21st level.

Holy Dilettante

Prerequisite: Half-elf, any divine class

Benefit: Once per encounter, when you use the power you chose for your Dilettante racial trait, you can deal radiant damage with that power instead of its normal damage type.

Master Communicator

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Benefit: You master the Comprehend Languages ritual. In addition, you can perform it once per day without paying its component cost and can use Diplomacy in place of Arcana to perform the ritual.

Revitalizing Dabbler

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Benefit: When you hit at least one target with the power you chose for your Dilettante racial trait, until the end of your next turn any creature that regains hit points from one of your healing powers regains 3 extra hit points.

Wild Dilettante

Prerequisite: Prerequisite: Half-elf, druid, you must have chosen an implement power for your Dilettante racial trait

Benefit: You can choose to treat the power you selected for your Dilettante racial trait as though it has the beast form keyword.

Half-Elf Polymath

"Our greatest limits are those we impose upon ourselves."

Prerequisite: Half-elf

You have a trick that none of your enemies expect you to have. It has come in handy time and again, making you wonder what other skills you might learn to further confound your foes.

You begin by practicing your trick to make it more powerful and even faster to perform. Eventually, you realize that your allies provide instruction in a variety of ways. Some might call what you do imitation, but that barely scratches the surface of the relationship you have with your allies. You can become one of your allies, if only for a moment, and use his or her power as your own. Only the choice of allies you keep around you limits your range of options, and you can take advantage of each ally's strengths to defeat your common foes.

Half-Elf Polymath Path Features

Dabbler Action (11th level): When you spend an action point and use the extra action to use the power you gained from your Dilettante racial trait, you can move your speed or shift 1 square before or after you resolve the extra action.

Well-Rounded (11th level): Choose any two skills in which you are not trained. You become trained in those skills.

Broad Dilettante (16th level): Choose a 1st-level at-will attack power from any class that is different from yours. You gain that power.

Half-Elf Polymath Powers

Practiced Dilettante Half-Elf Polymath Attack 11

You give your enemies a little something extra that they weren't expecting.

Encounter
Standard Action Personal

Effect: You use the power you gained from your Dilettante racial trait. If you hit, you deal 2[W] extra damage if your Dilettante power is a weapon attack, or 2d8 extra damage if it is not a weapon attack.

Skill Dabbler Half-Elf Polymath Utility 12

Your diverse set of skills allows you to show amazing proficiency in a variety of areas occasionally.

Daily
Minor Action Personal

Effect: Choose one skill in which you are not trained. Until the end of the encounter, you are trained in that skill.

Preparing Infinite Reflections

Once your character has access to *infinite reflections*, you should consider finding out what power options you have available to you now. Before the gaming session begins, take time to figure out the statistics for each of these options so that you have them ready when it's time to use those options in the game. To help you remember the source of those powers, make sure you note the character from whom the power comes. If a new character enters the party or new at-will options open up to you for other reasons, be sure to add those options to the mix, but also remove any that are no longer available to you.

If you're ever concerned about too many powers to choose from, you can always pick one ally and just use his or her at-will powers.

Infinite Reflections Half-Elf Polymath Attack 20

You unleash a flurry of attacks against your foes, taking the best tricks of your allies to use against your enemies.

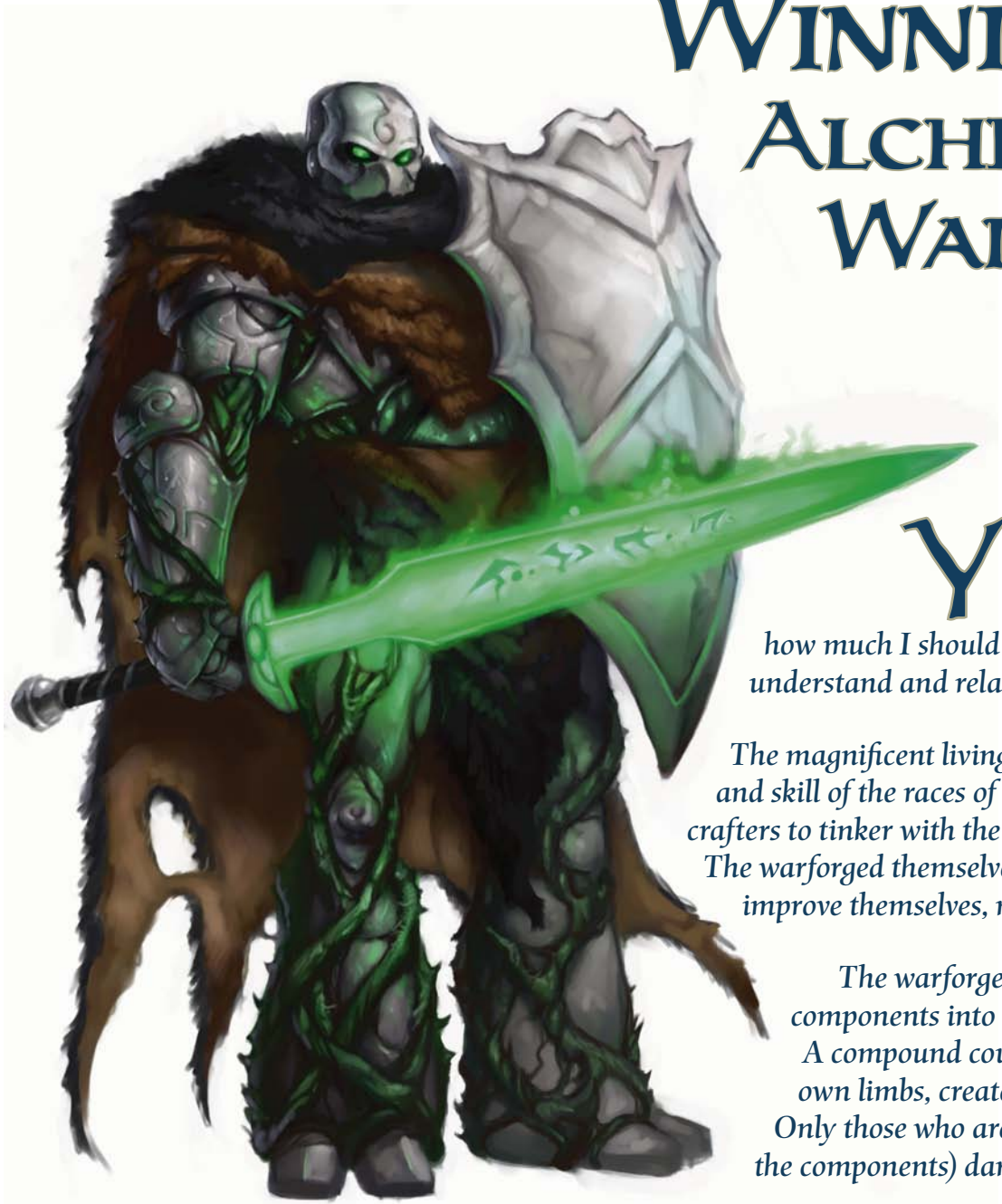
Daily ✦ Stance
Minor Action Personal

Effect: You assume the infinite reflections stance. Until the stance ends, you can use the 1st-level at-will attack powers of any ally within 10 squares of you as though you knew that power. You use all your own statistics to determine the effect of that power.

About the Author

Jim Auwaerter hails from a small village off the coast of the Lugotak Sea, far to the north of the Moonsea. Please feel free to give feedback to him on the Wizards Community forums or at www.loremaster.org. Follow Jim online at www.twitter.com/heridfel.

Winning Races: Alchemical Warforged



By Logan Bonner
Illustration by Tyler Walpole

You think I'm less alive because I had no blood at my creation. But I chose to gain it later, and the fact that I must seek the ingredients and mix it myself reminds me how much I should appreciate it. My alchemical blood allows me to better understand and relate to you meat people.

The magnificent living constructs called warforged demonstrate the ingenuity and skill of the races of the world. Their presence inspires more ingenuity, driving crafters to tinker with the magical and physical details of new warforged they create. The warforged themselves (at least, ones with arcane knowledge) are equally likely to improve themselves, making modifications they believe will best suit them.

The warforged who experiment with grafting volatile alchemical components into their bodies must be willing to risk great danger. A compound could limit the warforged alchemist's control over his or her own limbs, create unforeseen side effects, or explode and damage the body. Only those who are certain of their arcane skills (or those of the person altering the components) dare become alchemical warforged.

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The Created and the Creators

Those who were created initially with alchemical components might choose not to develop any greater understanding. They use an *alchemical heart* or *alchemical atomizer* to best effect and have someone more knowledgeable maintain the devices as necessary. Others become fascinated with their special modifications and learn about alchemy. They're frequently drawn to the study of arcane magic and might modify their bodies in other ways. Warforged who weren't created with alchemical components might add them later in their lives, though this poses special risks.

The alchemical ingredients alter a warforged's perception. Many alchemical warforged say they can "feel their vials ache" in the presence of magic or feel a sizzle when they touch substances that react oddly with their alchemical components. Ordinary warforged feel fewer physical sensations, so alchemical warforged find they can relate to the aches and pains of flesh-and-blood creatures better than their more mechanical kindred.

Alchemical warforged suffer more deterioration over time than other warforged, as compounds break down or strenuous activity causes liquids to leak. If the warforged or one of its allies knows alchemy well, he or she can maintain and repair the alchemical components easily. But some warforged don't know their creators and are left without anyone to oversee their repair. In extreme cases, other alchemists can't duplicate the esoteric formulas a particular creator used. An alchemical warforged might need to find his or her creator—no easy task—to survive.

Alchemical Warforged in Eberron

The first warforged to incorporate alchemical substances into their bodies came out of the Cannith forgeholds in the final few years of the Last War. They were the brainchild of Torrit D'Cannith, an inventor who lamented being born without the Mark of Making and who sought a new way to get ahead. Just when he was finally gaining recognition, the war ended and he chose to desert his house, taking a loyal alchemical warforged name Function with him.

These details aren't well-known, but warforged across Eberron swap tall tales of a strange living construct bristling with glowing vials that contain peculiar powders and oils. The significance of this invention is not lost on the Lord of Blades, who seeks to create his own alchemy-using elite troops.

The Reforging Process

To add alchemical components, a warforged must disassemble parts of his or her body—often vital pieces—and then incorporate the alchemical substances or devices before putting his or her body parts back together. Unlike the simple mechanical procedure of attaching an armblade or the slightly more complicated process of adding armor plates, alchemical additions require a deeper knowledge of the magical processes that animate warforged and give them their peculiar breed of "life." If attaching an armblade is like fastening a hook to the stump where a human's hand was hacked off, adding alchemical blood is akin to tearing up layers of muscle, bonding powders and vines to the bone, then putting the flesh back intact. (The feats listed below represent the most invasive alterations; the warforged components require less rebuilding.)

Alchemical components can be conspicuous or well-hidden. Rarely do alchemical blood and other permanent alterations show any visible signs of their presence, though specific substances might glow from between the body's fibrous bundles or exude distinctive scents. Fire- or cold-based substances typically heat or chill the warforged's body.

Alchemical Warforged Backgrounds

The following backgrounds can inform the backstory of a warforged who uses alchemy.

Experimental Prototype: Legions of warforged rolled out from the creation forges, built to be ultimate soldiers. But the creators constantly made improvements and tried new techniques. You're one of the successful experiments—born of iron and alchemy, destined for greater things than your rank-and-file kin. The resources poured into your creation make you unique, and you find it difficult not to consider yourself greater than your peers. Do you still work for those who created you, or have you escaped their control? Has your superiority made you arrogant, or do you see a duty to use your gifts to help others? Were there any errors in your form that still cause problems?

Associated Skills: Athletics, Endurance

Incomplete Creation: You never emerged intact from the creation forges like the others of your race. No, your "birth" was a fluke, and you were far from complete. Since your awakening, you've had to piece together the rest of your body from whatever you could find, using any techniques at your disposal. The alchemical substances you developed keep you alive and complete you, but they're mere patches, inferior to a complete original body. Was your creation forge shut down or destroyed before your completion? Did an

accident awaken your consciousness, or did someone bring your incomplete body to life for a purpose? Do you consider the life you were granted a blessing or a curse?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Endurance

Self-Improvement Expert: When your joints squeak or a connecting fiber tears, you could fix it easily. But why not replace it with something *better?* You're lucky to be a warforged. Creatures of flesh can't make the same upgrades you can. Your body has few original parts left—and good riddance! Does your fascination with modifying your body drive you to create homunculi or other constructs as well? If a new part becomes available, do you try it out though it might be dangerous?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Thievery

FEATS

Most of these feats represent ways in which your body is constructed to include alchemical components.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Alchemical Affinity

Prerequisite: Warforged

Benefit: Once per attack when you hit an enemy using a consumable alchemical item attack power, you gain temporary hit points equal to your Constitution modifier.

Alchemical Blood

Prerequisite: Warforged

Benefit: Choose a damage type—acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, poison, or thunder. When you use an attack power or alchemical item attack power with that keyword, you gain a +1 feat bonus to the damage roll. The bonus increases to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 21st level.

While you have any temporary hit points, you gain an additional +1 bonus to your damage rolls with alchemical item attack powers.

WARFORGED COMPONENTS

Alchemical Atomizer — Level 8

This embedded storage chamber in your hands infuses your weapon with alchemical power when you make an attack.

Item Slot: Hands (embedded component) 3,400 gp
Requirement: You must have the living construct racial trait to use this item.
Property: You can stow one alchemical item that can be applied to a weapon (such as *alchemical silver* or *inferno oil*) within the *alchemical atomizer*.
Power (At-Will): Free Action. Use this power when you make a weapon attack. Use the alchemical item stowed in the *alchemical* atomizer on the weapon you are holding. (This consumes the item as usual).

Alchemical Defense Nodes — Level 5+

Several slots melded to your surface can hold alchemical materials. The latent energy in the alchemical item suffuses the armor, providing protection against similar effects.

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Armor: Chain, scale, plate (attached component)
Requirement: You must have the living construct racial trait to use this item.
Enhancement: AC
Property: You can stow up to three consumable alchemical items within this armor.
Property: At the end of an extended rest, choose one consumable alchemical item stowed within this armor; this item must be no more than 5 levels lower than the level of this armor. If that item has an attack power with the acid, cold, fire, lightning, or poison keyword, until you take another extended rest you gain resist 5 damage against that damage type. If the item's power has more than one of these keywords, you gain resistance to each type.
Level 15: Resist 10.
Level 25: Resist 15.

Alchemical Failsafe — Level 6+

When you become too battered to continue fighting at full strength, this launcher located in your abdomen automatically triggers an alchemical item.

Lvl 6 1,800 gp Lvl 26 1,125,000 gp
Lvl 16 45,000 gp
Item Slot: Waist (embedded component)
Requirement: You must have the living construct racial trait to use this item.
Property: You can stow one consumable alchemical item within this item.
Power (At-Will): When you use your second wind, if you have a consumable alchemical item stowed that is 10th level or lower, you can use the stowed item as a part of the same action without having to draw it or spend an action to use it.
Level 16: You can use the at-will power with alchemical items of 20th level or lower.
Level 26: You can use the at-will power with any alchemical item.

Alchemical Launcher — Level 5

This springloaded armpiece fires alchemical items with great accuracy and without exposing you to attack.

Item Slot: Arm (attached component) 1,000 gp
Requirement: You must have the living construct racial trait to use this item.
Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to attack rolls with consumable alchemical item powers, and you don't provoke opportunity attacks for making ranged or area attacks with alchemical items.

About the Author

Logan Bonner designed and edited 4th Edition products at Wizards of the Coast until 2009. He now lives in the Seattle area and works as a freelance game designer, writer, and editor.

Channel Divinity: Moradin's Faithful

By Michael W. Haneline
Illustration by Mike Faille

With his hammer and his pick, Moradin struck the primordial earth and formed mountains. With his hammer and the Soulforge, he fashioned the firstborn dwarves from bedrock, iron, and diamonds. With his hammer and his tenacity, he struck down each primordial that would think to destroy his creations. And so, the dwarves, humans, and other people of the world were inspired. They learned the value of patience, stoicism, loyalty, and honor. They discovered mining, smithing, and the crafts of the artisan. The creations became creators, and Moradin was pleased.

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This article offers advice and new rules for player characters who choose Moradin as a divine patron. A character who serves Moradin joins the ranks of iron-willed dwarves, humans, and others who embrace the virtues of stoicism, patience, loyalty, and honor, and who understand the importance of lasting creation.

Serving Moradin

First and foremost, Moradin is the god of creation. As such, Moradin is best served whenever a work is completed, whether that work is a dwarven craghammer, an eladrin lord's bejeweled crown, or a halfling's sturdy riverboat. He is likewise honored by the making of less tangible (but nonetheless enduring) creations, such as a prosperous nation or a close-knit family.

Many of Moradin's most ardent followers fall into three categories: the faithful Sonnlinor, the brave Kuldar, and the tireless Nalauk.

The Sonnlinor

A sect of the most devout of Moradin's clergy are called the Sonnlinor, which roughly translates as "those who work stone." They teach the virtues of patience, stoicism, loyalty, and honor through their words and deeds. They serve not just communities of dwarves, but of humans, dragonborn, and many others. The Sonnlinor patiently train apprentices in the arts of smithing and stonecutting, offer loyal counsel in times of distress, and stoically protect the people of their communities against the direst threats.

In their constant struggles against powerful foes, the Sonnlinor have been inspired with a special prayer for those whose faith is greater than their stature.

Cleric Prayer

Sonnlinor's Hammer — Cleric Attack 1

Your weapon is guided by your faith to strike true and weaken your enemy's zeal.

At-Will ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action — **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC.
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage. The next attack the target makes before the end of your next turn takes a penalty to the damage roll equal to your Charisma modifier.
Level 21: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage.
Special: This power can be used as a melee basic attack.

The Kuldar

Kuldar literally means "axe-cutter," but the term is used for different kinds of heroes who fight in Moradin's name—from those who wade into the fray with axe or hammer, to those who fire away with bow or wand. The Kuldar includes orders of warriors who worship Moradin, from the elite Hammers of Moradin to the sacred Soulforged knighthood.

Some of the fiercest Kuldar come from the Dawn Forge monastery, hidden away in the mountains beyond Hammerfast. These zealous avengers temper both weapons and souls in astral fire, and they eternally carry out the fight against giants and titans that has waged since the Primordial War. Their most elite members have perfected divine attack forms that draw inspiration from the works of Moradin.

Avenger Prayers

Refire the Forge — Avenger Utility 16

The fires of the Soulforge flare to life inside you. The more your enemies try to quench them, the brighter those flames burn.

Daily ✦ Divine, Stance, Weapon
Minor Action — **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, you regain hit points equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier each time you hit an enemy with an attack. Additionally, until the stance ends you can make the following at-will attack:
Immediate Interrupt — **Melee** 1
Trigger: You are bloodied or reduced to 0 hit points by an enemy's attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

Soulforge Hammering — Avenger Attack 17

Like Moradin working the Soulforge, you scorch your enemy with astral fire as you hammer at him relentlessly.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Fire, Radiant, Weapon
Standard Action — **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] fire and radiant damage.
Effect: Once per turn until the end of your next turn, you repeat this attack against the target of this power as a minor action. Additionally, until the end of your next turn, your melee attacks deal extra radiant and fire damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifiers.

The Nalauk

Moradin smiles most upon the Nalauk, the "ever-toiling," who spend their lives crafting and mining. Without such honest workers, civilization would crumble. In their guts burn the fires of the Soulforge, driving them to work tenaciously, to build, or to gather so others might build more. Though they are not gifted with great spiritual powers, the Nalauk are the center of the Moradin worship in any community that reveres the deity. The most important duty of the Kuldar is to protect the Nalauk and their creations, and the most sacred duty of the Sonnlinor is to mentor and guide each generation of these laymen.

Character Options

Those who devote themselves to Moradin have an assortment of character options that reflect the virtues of the Sonnlinor and set them apart from those of other faiths.

Soulforged

"I have been tempered by the white flames of the Soulforge itself. I will not break!"

Prerequisite: Must worship Moradin and have the *Moradin's resolve* Channel Divinity power

Millennia ago, when the dwarves fought for their freedom from the giants, a pair of champions arose. Twin brothers Gildur and Toris Irontop fought fiercely and bravely, crying out to Moradin with each victory. They seemed unstoppable . . . until they came up against Durandus, "the Iron King." Their axes could not nick his stony hide, and their hammers cracked against him. In the end, Gildur fled into the mountains with his grievously wounded brother on his back, praying to Moradin for guidance.

That night, both brothers had a vision of when Moradin first forged the dwarves from iron, bedrock, and diamonds. Each gained understanding of the Soulforge's power; Toris used its white fire to strengthen his body and soul, and Gildur used it to forge a hammer that could smash through iron like glass. When they battled Durandus a second time, both of their weapons glowed white with the heat of the Forge, burning, cutting, and crushing Durandus until he was no more.

After their victory, the brothers gathered the most pious followers of Moradin and taught them what they had learned. These devotees formed the first generation of the Soulforged knighthood, which has spent thousands of years mastering the white fire, and using it to protect Moradin's followers.

Soulforged Paragon Path Features

Reforged Action (11th level): When you spend an action point, you regain use of Channel Divinity or one divine encounter attack power of 11th level or lower.

Weapon of the Dwarf-Father (11th level): You gain the *weapon of the dwarf-father* power.

Weapon of the Dwarf-Father — Soulforged Feature 11

Your weapon glows with the power of Moradin's forge.

At-Will ✦ Divine, Fire, Radiant
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Target: One weapon you are holding
Effect: Weapon attacks made with the target weapon deal fire and radiant damage instead of their normal damage types. Additionally, the weapon emits bright light in all squares within 15 squares of you. This effect lasts until you end it as a free action or until you end your turn and are not holding the target weapon.

Foe Hammer (16th level): If you use *Moradin's resolve* with an attack that uses the weapon under the effects of your the *weapon of the dwarf-father* power, you also deal 1d10 extra radiant and fire damage with that weapon until the end of your next turn. If the attack scores a critical hit, the target is also stunned until the end of your next turn.

Soulforged Prayers

Forge Fire Blast — Soulforged Attack 11

Your weapon glows bright with the heat of the Soulforge. It hurtles into one enemy, and then releases a searing blast of celestial fire.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Fire, Radiant, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC.
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier fire and radiant damage.
Effect: Make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: Each enemy within 3 squares of the primary target.
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d8 + Wisdom modifier fire and radiant damage, and the secondary target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Tempered — Soulforged Utility 12

Like adamantine forged in the Soulforge, you are unbreakable.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You are hit by an attack
Effect: You gain a +4 power bonus to Fortitude and Will until the end of your next turn, and a +5 power bonus to your next saving throw made before the end of the encounter.

Soul of the Dwarf-Father Soulforged Attack 20

You call out to Moradin, praying for his greatest blessings. Your body and weapon glow with astral light that sears your enemies and drives them back.

Daily ✦ Divine, Fire, Radiant, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC.
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier fire and radiant damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, your attacks deal extra fire and radiant damage equal to your Wisdom modifier, and enemies treat all squares adjacent to you as difficult terrain.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Fortifying Word

Prerequisite: Cleric, *healing word* class feature

Benefit: Targets of your *healing word* also gain a +4 power bonus to Fortitude and to saving throws against poison until the end of your next turn.

Pupil of the All-Father

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship Moradin

Benefit: You have mastered the Enchant Magic Item and Make Whole rituals, and can perform them without a ritual book.

When using Enchant Magic Item to enchant weapons or armor, you perform the ritual as if you were four levels higher.

Once per day, you can perform the Make Whole ritual without expending components, as long as the component cost would have been 100 gp or fewer.

Shared Vitality

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship Moradin

Benefit: When you use your second wind, you can choose to regain no hit points, but allow an ally within 5 squares of you to regain hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Stone Cunning

Prerequisite: Dwarf or must worship Moradin

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Dungeoneering checks and a +2 bonus to any skill check made to detect a trap, hazard, or secret door.

Symbol of the Sonnlinor

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship Moradin

Benefit: You gain proficiency with all military hammers, axes, and picks, and you can use any hammer, axe, or pick you wield and are proficient with as an implement for any divine power you use.

Magic Items

Avalanche Boots Level 10

These heavy leather boots are covered in thick rock dust, and will not clean off no matter how well they are scrubbed.

Lvl 10 5000 gp
Item Slot: Feet
Property: Whenever you hit with an attack that pushes a target, you push the target 1 extra square.
Property: After charging, you can shift 1 square before your turn ends.

Belt of Sonnlinor Righteousness Level 6+

This iron-plated belt was first crafted by the Sonnlinor to protect against the underhanded tactics of goblins and giants.

Lvl 6	1,800 gp	Lvl 26	1,125,000
Lvl 16	45,000 gp		

Item Slot: Waist
Property: You gain resist 10 to all damage when you have 0 hit points or fewer.
Level 16: Resist 20.
Level 26: Resist 30.
Power (Daily): No Action. *Trigger:* An attack reduces you to 0 hit points or fewer. *Effect:* The triggering attacker takes damage equal to the damage you took from the triggering attack.

Dwarven Thrower Level 2+

The weighted haft of this mithral weapon is engraved with images of giants being struck down by dwarven throwing hammers.

Lvl 2	+1	520 gp	Lvl 17	+4	65,000
Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000

Weapon: Hammer, axe
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus
Property: This weapon can be used as a heavy thrown weapon with a range of 6/12.
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit a Large or larger creature with an attack using this weapon. *Effect:* You deal 2 extra damage per plus of the weapon.

About the Author

Michael Haneline started playing D&D® when he was eight years old, when he and his best friend found an original D&D Basic boxed set at a local garage sale. He has been playing, DMing, and designing ever since. This is his first *Dragon*® article, and he'd like to thank his friends Dan, Justin, Jessica, Genevieve, and Tex for their support.

Channel Divinity: Ioun

By Andrew Schneider
Illustration by Tyler Jacobson

Overlooking the crystal clear ocean of the Feywild stands a towering lighthouse, its beacon illuminating the path to safe harbor. Straddling a bleak desert crossroads in the Shadowfell, a caravanserai sends light onto the night sands, welcoming any who cross her threshold in peace. Far beneath the earth, hidden among the labyrinthine halls of a dragon ossuary, an obsidian archway opens onto a lively tavern. These and other remote structures are redoubts of the collectors, an ancient order of Ioun dedicated to preserving knowledge in preparation of coming darkness.

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The Collectors were founded in the heyday of the human kingdom of Nerath. They had a strong presence in every city of appreciable size, maintaining great libraries and archives, and facilitating free and open access to new discoveries and research. The order was nearly destroyed in the chaos surrounding the fall of Nerath, and their collections were lost to the winds.

The surviving collectors—mostly field agents operating far from the oversight and knowledge of the order's central administration—held a conclave in the charred ruins of the Imperial library. Sifting through remembered histories and prophecy to understand how everything had gone so wrong, the collectors came to one, devastating conclusion: Nerath was no accident. They came to believe that an unknown force had manipulated events to their disastrous outcome, and that this was not the first time such events had transpired.

The Collectors splintered into three distinct branches: the chroniclers, the excavators, and the seekers. The chroniclers would travel the world, seeking out geniuses, experts, and prophets to record their thoughts and ideas, and preserve them for future generations. The excavators were to brave dangerous ruins, recovering valuable artifacts for study and use against the force they came to call, simple, the Enemy. The seekers vowed to undertake the most dangerous task of all: Ferret out the identity of the Enemy, and strike before it could strike against knowledge and civilization once more. Each branch founded a remote, fortified outpost and began rebuilding, promising to meet and share their findings once each decade.

Fifty years ago, the seekers never arrived at the meeting, and haven't been heard from since. Furthermore, teams sent to investigate their headquarters deep beneath the ruins of the Imperial library never returned. The remaining branches quickly established a bevy of smaller redoubts, began actively recruiting new members, and spread their knowledge far and wide, so that if and when the Enemy next strikes, some would survive. At the same time, the order's curators have begun carefully reconstructing existing seeker data, following their footsteps to the edge of oblivion.

Be it dedicated to the excavators or the chroniclers, a Collector redoubt is open to travelers and pilgrims, and the collectors on duty take great pains to aid visitors. For a nominal donation, they provide reference and copying services, as well as classes in the analysis, manufacture, and repair of ancient magic. On occasion, they even lend out pieces of their collection to worthy and persuasive heroes, with a team standing by ready to retrieve the borrowed artifact should those heroes fail or renege on their promise.

Gaining and Using a Skill Power

(Reprinted from *Player's Handbook 3*, page 164) You can gain and use only the skill powers associated with your trained skills. Whenever you reach a level that grants you a utility power from your class, you can choose a skill power in place of a class power. The skill power you choose must be of the same level as or lower in level than the class power you would have gained.

You can use retraining (*Player's Handbook*, page 28) to replace a class power with a skill power and vice versa, as long as the new power is of the same level as or lower in level than the replaced power.

You cannot replace a utility power from a paragon path or an epic destiny with a skill power.

Excavator

In, out, and alive– that's the excavator motto. Though you might share paths with tomb robbers or monster slayers, yours is a higher calling: knowledge. There will always be another artifact and another team to do the job, but nothing can replace what you've seen with your own eyes.

–Curator Aramais

Those seeking to find knowledge in the form of artifacts and treasure might be recruited by the Collectors to assist them in this capacity. However, although a job might suit you, the organization surrounding the job might not. The following background could provide your character with a few interesting hooks.

Banished from the Order: You were an excavator, trained by the Collectors to find a way into dangerous vaults and trapped tombs, recover precious artifacts, and escape. Unfortunately, one of your missions triggered a terrible curse, and the curator of your chapter cast you out, unwilling to risk the curse falling upon the rest of the order. What is the nature of your curse? Do you seek a cure, or are you resigned to live with the consequences? What artifact cursed you? Do you have it still, or is it in the hands of the Collectors? Perhaps you were part of a team prior to your current adventuring party. Were they also cursed, and if so, what happened to them?

Associated Skills: Acrobatics, Thievery

Associated Languages: Supernal

Skill Powers

It takes both luck and extraordinary skill to find a way in and out of ancient, guarded places. The Collectors train their members in esoteric techniques to draw on both luck and skill and unleash the result at just the right moment.

Warp in the Weave — Arcana Utility 6

You spend energy and tap into the web of magic that connects everything, ready to create a few temporary holes.

Encounter
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Requirement: You must have at least 1 healing surge.
Trigger: A creature uses a burst or blast power that includes you
Effect: You spend a healing surge but regain no hit points. The triggering burst or blast does not target you or your square.

Grit and Spittle — Endurance Utility 2

Drawing on pure stubbornness, you're ready see your way through disaster.

Encounter
Minor Action **Personal**
Requirement: You must have at least 1 healing surge.
Effect: You spend a healing surge but regain no hit points. You make a saving throw against every effect on you that a save can end.

Lessons of History — History Utility 10

As you watch your allies, you draw upon past lessons to shout out a few pointers.

Daily
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Requirement: You must have at least 1 healing surge.
Target: Each ally in burst
Effect: You spend a healing surge but regain no hit points. Each target can regain one expended encounter utility power of level 10 or lower.

Nightshade Draught — Nature Utility 16

As long as you survive the aftertaste, this concoction can keep you going on borrowed time.

Daily
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You are reduced to 0 hit points or fewer and don't die
Effect: Dying does not cause you to fall unconscious until the end of your next turn. You automatically fail a death saving throw if you are still dying at the end of your next turn.
Sustain Minor: The effect persists until the end of your next turn, and you automatically fail a death saving throw if you are still dying at the end of your next turn.

Deliverance of Faith — Religion Utility 6

You give of yourself in the belief that somewhere, something will give a little back.

Encounter
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You spend a healing surge but regain no hit points. You gain temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Chronicler

To know, to learn, is to become greater than you are. Without the knowledge of the past, we will never progress to a brighter future.

–Curator Olivia

Before your character started adventuring, perhaps he or she was a member of the Collectors, and, more specifically, a chronicler for them. You can use the following background to help integrate the Collectors into your character's story.

Too Many Secrets: You were a respected field agent of the Collectors, following the trail of lost knowledge, identifying likely ruins for later excavation, and wresting knowledge from those who would hoard or misuse it. Then you uncovered information that rocked the foundations of your beliefs in the Collectors and their mission. Unable to reconcile the information you found with your experiences as a chronicler, you resigned from the order to search for the truth. What did you find out about the Collectors? Do you reveal this information to those you meet, or do you hold it tight and secret against the dictates of Ioun? Does anyone else know what you do, and if so, what has happened to them?

Associated Skills: Insight, Streetwise

Associated Languages: Abyssal

Skill Powers

With their keen minds and ready access to nearly forgotten lore, chroniclers take pride in being prepared for nearly any situation.

Studied Casting — Arcana Utility 2

You catch an error at the last moment, correcting a malformed glyph before it can ruin your ritual.

Daily
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You make a skill check to perform a ritual and dislike the result.
Effect: Reroll the check with a +4 power bonus. You must use the second result.

Practiced Mental Defense — Dungeoneering Utility 16

Your experience with unnatural mental influences has taught you how to snap an ally back to his or her senses—mostly—with a word.

Daily
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An effect dominates or stuns an ally within 10 squares of you
Target: The triggering ally in burst
Effect: The effect dazes the target, instead of dominating or stunning the target.

Root Understanding — History Utility 2

Your studies in history have exposed you to a variety of languages, which sometimes allows you to understand a language in which you aren't fluent.

Daily
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You see or hear a language you don't understand.
Effect: You can understand, read, speak, and write the triggering language until the end of the encounter.

Natural Terrain Understanding — Nature Utility 6

You alert your allies to hidden advantages in the nearby terrain, giving them an opportunity to shift the battle and defend themselves.

Encounter
Minor Action **Close** burst 3
Target: Each ally in burst
Effect: The target gains a +2 power bonus to AC until the end of your next turn. In addition, the target can shift 2 squares as a free action.

Assurance of Prophecy — Religion Utility 10

You call out choice verses of prophecy. The knowledge that destiny is on your side renews your ally's vigor.

Encounter
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 5
Trigger: An ally within 5 squares of you spends a healing surge
Effect: The triggering ally gains 3d6 temporary hit points.
Level 21: 3d12 temporary hit points.

Heroic Tier Feats

The following feats are useful for Collectors who seek out lost or hidden knowledge.

Dungeon Experience

Prerequisite: Trained in Dungeoneering

Benefit: You can use Dungeoneering in place of Thievery to disable traps and open locks.

Traveler's Insight

Prerequisite: Trained in Insight

Benefit: You gain a feat bonus to Insight checks equal to the number of languages you know.

About the Author

Andrew G. Schneider always wanted to be a wizard when he grew up, but now instead of throwing fireballs, he makes magic with words. An author and freelance game designer, he also serves as Cormyr's writing director for Living Forgotten Realms. Andrew lives in his hometown in the Washington, DC area.

The Shelly Awards

BY SHELLY MAZZANOBLE
illustrations by William O'Conner

I love awards season! The upsets, the rivals, the red carpet disses with Joan Rivers! It's the time of year when we don our best threads and honor the best of the best of the previous year. It's apparently also the time of year when cheating husbands come out of the woodwork. (Really, Jesse James? Seriously?)

Certainly plenty went down in your D&D campaigns that would be worthy of an accolade. I know it's true for me. So without further ado, I'd like to honor the excellent adventures and supporting casts who made the past year so memorable.

Category: Best Dungeon Master

Sure, I've had other DM's. Yes, others are willing to play with me, despite my reputation. Never underestimate the power of baked goods.

The nominees are:

Michael Low: Mike gets major props just for the Australian accent. Even hearing the words "knocked prone," "23 points of damage," and "three failed death saves" sounds downright pleasant with his down-under lilt.

But still, Michael is responsible for the death of one of my most beloved and beleaguered characters: Kevin Rogers (more on him later). A lot of Dungeon Masters might take great pleasure in beating the tar out of such an adored character, but Michael seemed almost as traumatized as I was at Kevin's untimely demise.

He also designed a bitchin' computer program that tracked our initiatives, conditions, bonuses, and weaknesses, and projected them all on a large screen. Perhaps I was paying more attention to the blinking crimson line he surrounded Kevin's name with than to the crimson lines oozing out of Kevin on the playmat. In either case, Michael gives new meaning to the phrase, "killing me softly." Nicely done, mate. Now, when do you tell me it was all a bad dream?

Bart Carroll: It was my first ever D&D game outside of work or a convention. It was a Saturday afternoon! My favorite friends were coming over! I had a freshly rolled up 1st-level razorclaw shifter avenger itching for a little excitement. Not having DMed in months, Bart was eager to take the helm and run us through a single combat encounter set in the Chaos Scar. It was going to be a great day.

Bart spent days prepping for the big adventure—almost as long as I spent prepping the dinner menu. And then someone had a grand idea: microbrew taste test. Sure! This is the Pacific Northwest. We invented multitasking with microbrews.

Everyone showed up armed with dice, pencils, guacamole, and beer. A plethora of porters! A surplus of stouts! And a dazzling array of aromatic IPAs. We sipped and judged and rolled dice, all while trying to rescue a horse from a sinkhole (it broke my heart) while fighting off giant ants and that lunatic Pung—the jackass with the stupid name who screeched at us from atop the sinking wagon.

And then our eladrin sorcerer developed beer muscles.

"I wanna get up in Pung's grill," she slurred.

"Pung's Grill," someone said. "I think I ate there once in Miami."

"But you're a sorcerer," I said. "Can't you just chill out and cast a few *chaos bolts*?"

"*Chaos bolts* are for weenies," she answered. "This clown is getting a knuckle sandwich."

And then she burst out laughing, thinking about a clown named Pung. And then I got the giggles. And then the eladrin sorcerer's husband lost it. And sadly Bart lost us all. We tried to hiccup our way through the encounter, but it was like our characters had been imbibing those several pints of microbrews. The warden tripped over a cobblestone when he tried to charge one of Pung's believers. The rogue didn't even try to dodge the giant ant's *grasping mandibles*. And my avenger was knocked off the wagon by a minion! *A minion!* The sorcerer—forget it. When she got knocked prone, she vacated to the living room to watch TV.

"Save yourselves!" she called to us. "*House Hunters* is in Belize!"

And that was before Bart trotted out the fell taint. Oh boy.

I never did find out how the encounter ended, but I did discover a delicious IPA and a player with a shorter attention span than I have.

New DM: Yeah, yeah, it's no surprise New DM gets a nod. He should, simply for the fact that he hasn't quit us yet.

New DM does all the things I think a great DM should do—makes sound effects, tells interesting stories, has a freaky memory not just for what happened in last week's game but what happened a year ago (and you have no idea how often I ask him to reference something).

He's also incredibly patient. I know I've said that before but it bears repeating. Playing D&D at work is not easy, because sometimes you have to *work*. Poor New DM lugs his minis and playmats and markers and magnetic nametags to the Lost Temple conference room only to find out Marty is in a meeting, Hilary called in sick, and Kierin has to leave early. Or better yet, the room has been commandeered by orcs. Or worse, upper management. Our game gets canceled, postponed, and backburnered more times than I pretend that I don't hear New DM telling me Tabitha took damage. And yet he still comes back, week after week. What does this tell you? The guy is clearly a couple fries short of a Happy Meal. And so are we for willingly following him into vacant conference rooms.

Chris Lindsey: The jury is still out on this guy, because I've only played two games with him at the helm, but his trash talking earned him a nod. Chris has graciously agreed to run a weekly lunchtime Encounters game. He and I sit right next to each other at the office, with nothing but a six-inch wall between us. Several times a day, we have conversations that go something like this:

"How come you didn't give Herteus a renown point for his moment of greatness?"

"Hmm... was his moment of greatness when he tripped over his feet on the suspension bridge or tried to use *send thoughts* to make the table of dwarves at the Yawning Portal buy the party a round of drinks?"

That *was* a brilliant use of *send thoughts*, I maintain.

Occasionally I glance up and spy him staring into the great white nothingness.

"What are you dreaming up there, buddy?" I ask.

"Different ways to kill your character," he answers.

Sigh... when will I ever learn?

And the award goes to . . .
New DM! Duh.

Category: Best Supporting Characters

I've realized that it's okay to branch out once in a while and try a new class or race—maybe experience a completely new role in the party. I have also learned that I make a terrible fighter, despite my best efforts. It's no surprise how attached I get to my characters. All of them. That's why this was an especially tough category. But there can be only one winner.

And the nominees are:

Tabitha, for her role as tielfing wizard in the Wyld Stallyns. Surprise! Not having Tabby in this category would be like not nominating Meryl Streep for Best Actress. Tabby's had her ups and downs. *Down* as in offering up a part of her soul to bring her beloved bear friend to life *at the expense of her party members*. And *up* as in casting *flaming sphere* nineteen = times this year and hitting every time. *And* selling part of her soul to bring her beloved bear friend to life. Come on, that's pretty badass.

Lunesto C. Crabb, for his role as razorclaw shifter avenger in The Big Baddies. Lunesto was a suave, shifty, little beast. I loved his affected accent and ascot-adorned self. It was noble of him to vow to avenge the murder of his brother Carlton C. Crabb, whom he was told died of natural causes. Lunesto begs to differ. One eyewitness claims he was drowned in a toilet bowl.

Lunesto never found out the truth, but he did get pushed around by a minion and almost kicked in the head by a horse. And surely greatness would have been his if only his player had been functioning with a sound mind. Sorry about that, buddy. Next time we'll play on a work night.

Kevin Rogers, for his role as minotaur barbarian. Yes, minotaurs can be named Kevin. (Bite it, Mike Mearls!) Kevin had grand artistic aspirations, but alas, minotaurs aren't exactly known for their sensitive souls. He was a poet with a penchant for sonnets and sunsets, but his size and clumsy strength forced him to take up barbarian as a day job. He never thrived in this career, and never was it more evident than when he faced off against an orium dragon in a playtest. Maybe it was his pacifist nature. Maybe it was the sun just about to set in the distance. Most likely it was that damn crumbling bridge.

Whatever the reason, Kevin couldn't bring himself to attack the beautiful dragon. She was a mother! She was protecting her young! So he took damage. Then he took more. And more. And then he missed on all three of his attack rolls (perhaps deliberately). And then he died. Quickly. And not "quickly" as in, "he never felt a thing." But as in, within the first 25 minutes. It practically took me longer to create him than to kill him! I was devastated, as I happen to love minotaurs *and* playing D&D for longer than 25 minutes. Rest in peace, Kevin. I'm sure someday we'll find out this was all just a bad dream.

Herteus Maximus, for his role as tiefling psion in D&D Encounters. So technically his given name is Heretus but he prefers to go by Herteus. Why? So he can say things like "Bring on the Hert!" before he ignites his infernal wrath.

Herteus is the kind of a guy you meet on spring break, and three weeks after you come home, you're still talking about what a tool he was. Cocky, clicky, and clubby in his attire, Herteus would be more at home working at a *Jersey Shore*-style t-shirt shop than working the crowd at the Yawning Portal. You want to hate his guts. You want him to button his shirt past his navel. And yet he's got the goods to back up that attitude. He can blow up your head just by thinking about it! Watching those beautiful ribbons of pain swirl around his opponent's head is just too cool. Or maybe he's just making you *think* he is.

And the award goes to . . .
Kevin Rogers! Sorry, Meryl. The tragedies always win.

Category: Best Adventure:

Every great D&D game consists of those "OMG" moments strung together like the links on a chainmail shirt. The Wyld Stallyns have had their fair share and most came from these stand-out adventures.
The nominees are:

Keep on the Shadowfell: The other day I was at Target and wandered over to the patio furniture section. In the garden section I saw these innocuous, ceramic cherub statues. I screamed. I couldn't help it. Every time I see those pudgy-cheeked angel babies, I'm reminded of those horrible Shadowfell infant statues that turned an innocuous nook in the dungeon into a toilet bowl trap of doom. Getting beat up by babies—even stone statue babies—is not cool!

It pains me to remember our time in the Keep on the Shadowfell, but not just because of those horrible statues. This is where the Wyld Stallyns lost a beloved party-member: Herbert Brown, a brave dragonborn fighter who got up and close and personal with a deadly portal. We should have known things were going to end badly when New DM greeted us in the Shadow Rift, our last encounter, with the words "Orcus statue" and "Crimson streams spill from above."

Tabitha's Arcana check resulted in the knowledge that if anyone passed through the portal, they would probably die instantly. And there was Herbert Brown. Inching toward it—drawn forth by the portal's *whispering lure*. He went 5 squares, then 5 more. Then he was hit with a *grasping claw* that knocked him prone. He was only 1 square away from entering unspeakable evil and certain death and yet the rest of the Wyld Stallyns weren't close enough (or brave enough) to save him. Except Tabitha. (Why she was that close to the portal, I'll never know.) She ran up to Herbert's lifeless body and managed to carry him a safe distance away. Impressive, yes, but Tabby's heroic deeds proved futile as Herbert Brown failed three death saves in a row and died right there in Tabitha's aching arms. R.I.P. Herbert, you big lug.

Siege of Bordrin's Watch: One thing comes to mind when I think of this adventure: Orcs. Those bastards are responsible for the demise of not one, but two Wyld Stallyns.

The adventure lead us to a seedy district of Overlook appropriately called The Blister. Upon our arrival, we were greeted with a welcoming band of bounty hunters who ambushed us in the street. Our halfling warlock, Atticus was taking a beating by one of the human guards and decided to use his fey pact ability to teleport onto the roof of a tenement 20 feet up. Teleporting may be cool, but climbing the ladder that was perched next to the building in plain site proved just as effective.

Poor Atticus found himself alone on the roof with not one, but two guards who proceeded to beat him unconscious. Figuring they'd loose interest in a comatose halfling, our healer opted to wait a round before coming to Atticus's rescue. But we were wrong. On their next turn, one of the humans coup de graced Atticus! The warlock survived, but only so that he could be killed by the falling damage he took when the other guard kicked his comatose body off the roof . . .

Was that really necessary, New DM?

A little later, with the carcasses of several orcs and fire beetles in our wake, we came to the Nexus—an eerily empty room with a stone catwalk leading a hundred feet above to the ceiling. It was our task to climb to the top and seal the Nexus. It was the job of the orcs to stop us. To add to the fun, every round more orcs spewed into battle from one of the six tunnels surrounding the chamber.

And then there was the skill challenge (and the fact that our paladin hated skill challenges) that would allow us to activate the control panel if we succeeded, but bring more orcs into combat if we failed. We succeeded, but the scalding water that gushed from the pipes to fill the room hardly seemed like a success. Most of us managed to make it to the top of the catwalk, damaged, bloodied, but alive. But our skill-check-hating paladin was lollygagging below, and she became the object of Tusk's scorn. She took enough damage to be knocked out, but she was too far below the rest of the party for anyone to get back to her in time. The boiling water kept pouring in and eventually overtook her lifeless body. Dragonborn soup for the adventuring party's soul. R.I.P Freya.

Shadow Rift of Umbraforge: This is the adventure where I decided I would:

A) Always hate shadar-kai

B) Open a bed and breakfast called "The Happy Beggar." This dream would be even better if I could find a nice retired paladin couple to run it for me.

But this adventure certainly wasn't about getting a little R&R. Quite the contrary.

The Wyld Stallyns were hot on the trail of that bugger, Sarshan. And what a pleasure it would be to

catch him. I fancied myself a soldier of PETA, stopping a madman from shaving bunnies with lavender scented shaving cream and squirting pheromones into the eyes of rats. Hey, the read-aloud text *says* Sarshan "magically augments living creatures for combat" in his creepy arcane tower. What sorts of images does that conjure in your mind?

But it wasn't so much Sarshan or the shadar-kai that were the problem. It was Sarshan's former underling, Modra, and his pet death boar. *Death boar*! We fought them both at the foundry along with a crew of shadowgoblins, two of whom managed to immobilize half the party with their *snaring shot*. Once immobilized, the death boar had its way with us, especially our new paladin and swordmage. And then there was that whole lava river thing.

It took us three weeks to finish this encounter, but we did so with everyone intact and dare I say some valuable lessons learned about strategic combat.

And the award goes to . . .
"Shadow Rift of Umbraforge" in honor of all the bunnies and rats that sacrificed themselves for Sarshan's empire

Lifetime Achievement Award

While it's fun to bond with different coworkers and roll some dice while drinking beers on a Saturday afternoon, the Wyld Stallyns don't have any competition when it comes to my favorite adventuring party. Although we're technically not the original cast, it's the spirit of the Wyld Stallyns that we're all about: A bit ragamuffin, a tad underdog, and a whole lotta Bad News Bears. I'm often shocked and amazed when we make it out of a dungeon alive. Sure, we may forget who was carrying the Ironfell signet ring that could have opened the portcullis without our backbreaking skill checks. And yes, sometimes we do rush out of deadly spaces without so much as a cursory glance around to spot the bucket of gold and level 9 magic item leaning against the stairwell. And oh yes, you know all about how the Wyld Stallyns handle the distribution of magic items.

"I guess we forgot about it," we sheepishly tell New DM when he asks who the lucky recipient was.

"You forgot to give someone in your party a level 9 magic item?" he asks in disbelief. "That's like forgetting to open your Christmas presents. *When they're wrapped up right in front of you and labeled with your name on them!*"

And yet, it's not quite the same when I play D&D without them. So here's to you, Wyld Stallyns. Please keep your speeches short.

That concludes the awards portion of this column. May the coming year bring you many award-worthy adventures. Until then!

About the Author
Shelly Mazzanoble loves doling out awards and hopes one day Joan Rivers will recognize her talent and ask her to cohost the Fashion Police.

March Madness!

D&D Play Report

BY CHRIS TULACH

This month, we have three big events happening in Organized Play, all on the back half of the month. Kicking things off on March 17 is the launch of the first season of D&D Encounters! Right on its heels is the first of several D&D Game Days this year, spotlighting the psionically-charged *Player's Handbook* 3. And finally, we close out the month with a trip to PAX East in Boston, where we'll be running all the D&D you can play all weekend long!

D&D Encounters is Almost Here!

The exciting first season of our new Wednesday in-store D&D play experience begins on March 17 and runs until June 2, as players around the world get ready to tackle the infamous dungeon of Undermountain! If you haven't caught up on what's going down, head to your local game store to ensure they've signed up to host sessions of D&D Encounters. You can check out the D&D Encounters website or my column last month for basic program information. Make sure that a store near you is participating!

Many questions have been asked about D&D Encounters program specifics over the past weeks, and with the season's launch imminent, I'd like to address some of them here. If you have more questions, want to leave feedback, or would like to share your experiences, head to the D&D Community page where we have an official D&D Encounters forum accessible to all community members.

Q. I understand that for this season of D&D Encounters, I can create my own 1st-level character or use a pre-generated one included. What are the rules for creating my own character?

A. The rules are pretty simple. To create your own 1st-level character, follow all the instructions listed in the *Player's Handbook*. You can select rules options from any player resource for your character, including the *Player's Handbook* series, the *Power* series, the *Player's Guides*, the *Adventurer's Vault* series, and *Dragon* Magazine content. You can choose any race that's received a full "PC race" write-up in any player book or source. So, for example, shadar-kai is OK, since it received a full write-up in *Dragon*, but kobold isn't, since it hasn't received that treatment. You start play with 100 gold (as normal). You might want to consider making your character fit in with the world of the Forgotten Realms, but that's not a requirement.

Q. It seems that this season, you can create a character and then export it into Living Forgotten Realms. How does that work?

A. At the end of the season, you can take your D&D Encounters: Undermountain character and play the character with all the accumulated XP and treasure you've earned in Living Forgotten Realms. When you finish the season, simply ensure that your character conforms to the most current rules for that campaign.

Q. Can I have multiple characters? What happens if I want to play a new character?

A. You can certainly create more than one character for D&D Encounters, although you'll probably want to play just one for most or all of the season. Since characters won't advance too far in the season, you'll start each character at 1st level with 0 experience points and track each character's XP, gold, and treasure separately. Your Renown Points are earned as a player, not as a character, so you'll keep accumulating all your Renown Points earned each week.

Q. Can I use RPGA Rewards cards at the table?

A. No. The D&D Encounters play program has its own rewards that can be used when you earn them.

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Q. Tell me more about Renown Points. How do you earn them?

A. Renown Points are a way to track your accomplishments with your character in-game and activities you're engaged in outside of the game. Each session, you'll earn a few points for completing an encounter (the primary way that you earn points). You can also earn points for hitting a milestone (which should happen roughly every 2 play sessions). All the other Renown Point awards are once per season. Once you've checked off that accomplishment, you'll earn the listed number of points, and you can't earn that award again during the season. Examples of in-game accomplishments include hitting a single enemy for 15+ damage in one attack, reviving a dying adventurer ally, and taking 50 points of enemy damage in a single session. Examples of out-of-game accomplishments include creating a character using the *D&D Character Builder*, creating a character with a *Player's Handbook 3* feat, and creating a character with a *Player's Handbook 3* class or race. Most of these awards can be earned at any point during the season, but once you've earned them, you've received that award and cannot receive it again. On average, a player can expect to earn about 3-7 points per session, but you could earn over 10 points in one session if you engage in a bunch of the Renown Point accomplishments at one time!

Q. What do you get for your Renown Points?

A. We have a few different D&D Encounters Rewards cards in this season's kit. In order to receive the first card, called the Delver Award, you need to earn 10 Renown Points. After the session in which you earn your first reward, you'll be presented with this card. The next two levels of rewards—the Explorer Award and the Adventurer Award—are given out at the end of the season. You can qualify for those rewards by earning 30 and 50 Renown Points, respectively. There are a limited number of those Rewards cards in the kit, so your organizer will have details on how those cards will be awarded at the conclusion of the season. Want to see what the first card looks like? Check it out here.

Q. I saw that you'll be using social networking tools to "enhance" the play experience. What does that mean?

A. We will be using Facebook, the Wizards Community site, and Twitter to make the Wednesday game experience even more special. Here's how.

Facebook: On Tuesdays, we'll post reminders of the next day's session, sometimes including a little teaser information. On Thursdays, we'll let you know to head to the Wizards Community site for a recap of the past day's action.

Wizards Community Site: Through the D&D Community page and official **D&D Encounters** forum, you'll be able to chat about what happened this week, talk in-character about the session, and share your feedback and experiences!

Twitter: Follow @Wizards_DnD on Twitter, bring your mobile device to the table, and see what comes up during your game session! Each hour, there'll be a new tweet that might change what happens at the game table—perhaps giving you an in-game benefit or altering the environment in some way. You'll know that the tweet is for D&D Encounters by its hashtag—#dndenc. Undermountain is a crazy and wild place. You never know what strange, latent magic still lurks in the mad mage Halaster's creation!

Come join your local game store on Wednesday nights beginning on March 17 for a new way adventure each week—one encounter at a time!

March 20: *Player's Handbook 3* Game Day

Hitting stores on March 20, the weekend after the first session of D&D Encounters, is the next D&D Game Day, celebrating the release of *Player's Handbook 3*! Last month, we gave some information and a little sneak preview of one of the characters. Just to whet your appetite, here's the full selection of the characters you'll be able to play in *Beneath the Lonely Tower*! Check out a store near you to pick up your *Player's Handbook 3* and participate in Game Day!

We have several more D&D Game Days planned for this year, so tune in next month for more details!

March 26-28: PAX East

At the brand-new PAX East gaming convention this year in Boston, Wizards of the Coast will be on hand as an exhibitor and to offer all sorts of D&D gaming. You can even catch up on missed D&D Encounters sessions! Check out our schedule below, and head to the PAX East website for more information on the show. If you're looking to volunteer as a DM, contact our head organizer, Willi Burger. We hope to see you there!

Brand-New to D&D

D&D Learn-to-Play

Want to learn how to play D&D 4th Edition? We'll teach you all the basics and send you out on your first

adventure! Everything is provided for you, and you can even keep your character. A 3-4 hour D&D 4th Edition play experience.

Runs Friday 3 pm and 7 pm; Saturday 11 am, 3 pm, and 7 pm; Sunday 11 am

New and Experienced D&D Players

D&D Encounters: Undermountain Session 1

Get caught up with D&D Encounters, our newest official D&D 4th Edition play program. Journey to Undermountain, one of the most infamous dungeons ever created, and uncover the secrets of Halaster's Lost Apprentice. D&D Encounters is a weekly, in-store mini-campaign played each Wednesday, one encounter at a time. If you play sessions 1 and 2 here, you'll be ready to play session 3 at your local store next week! You can create your own 1st-level character or use one of our pregenerated characters. Session 1 is a 2-hour D&D 4th Edition play experience.

Runs Friday 3 pm and 7 pm; Saturday 11 am, 3 pm, and 7 pm; Sunday 11 am

D&D Encounters: Undermountain Session 2

This is session 2 of the D&D Encounters: Undermountain convention special. See Session 1 for details. It is recommended that you play session 1 before playing session 2. Session 2 is a 2-hour D&D 4th Edition play experience.

Runs Friday 5 pm and 9 pm; Saturday 1 pm, 5 pm, and 9 pm; Sunday 1 pm

D&D Convention Delve: Ruins of the Spectral Glade

The deadly woods of the Spectral Glade hold ancient ruins and priceless treasures. Will your hero vanquish the evil at the heart of the forest and claim its riches or become just one more nameless corpse? Play as often as you like and earn prizes! 3rd-level characters are provided. A 1-hour D&D 4th Edition play experience.

Runs Friday 2 pm–10 pm; Saturday 10 am–10 pm; Sunday 10 am–2 pm

Some D&D Experience Recommended

D&D Dark Sun Preview: Death in the Arena

Get special sneak peeks at the newest D&D campaign setting releasing this summer! A templar holds a relic believed to be the key to unlocking a site of ancient power. Can you convince an agent of the sorcerer-king to relinquish the Seal of the Seven Winds without paying the ultimate price? A Dark Sun preview adventure set in the city-state of Tyr. 1st-level characters are provided. A 4-hour D&D 4th Edition play experience.

Runs Friday 3 pm and 7 pm; Saturday 11 am and 3 pm; Sunday 11 am

D&D DM Challenge: Horrors of the Underdark

This DM Challenge is a special one-time event running only at PAX East! DMs bring their best and most dangerous 6th-level Underdark adventures for you to conquer. Rate your play experience to determine the best adventure of the evening! 6th-level characters are provided. A 4-6 hour D&D 4th Edition play experience. Rules and more information available here.

Runs Saturday 7 pm

Other Events

Three-Dragon Ante Tournament

Play a few rounds of this fantastic card game using images from the Dungeons & Dragons game! The tournament winner takes home a stack of D&D books, and we might have some other surprises in store! A 4 hour play experience.

Runs Friday 7 pm

D&D Seminar: Save My Game! Live

Have a rules question or a problem at your table? Keep the action flowing and get DM tips as we troubleshoot your gameplay and DMing questions. The Wizards staff takes on all questions and gives you answers!

Runs Sunday 2:30 - 3:30 pm

That's all for this time! Have a great March Madness!

by Bill Slavicsek

AMPERSAND

Beyond Essentials and Other Deep Thoughts

I lied. I'm too busy to share any deep thoughts this month. But there are a few cool things I wanted to touch upon. In addition to some neat real-world events taking place this month, I also have a preview of our new monster stat block format and a little bit about how the front list is going to work after the Essentials products hit the market. Onward!

This Month in Products

We have a number of exceedingly cool products releasing in just a few short weeks, including *Player's Handbook* 3 (which features the psionic power source), the *Harrowing Halls* Dungeon Tiles set (which includes our first 3-D dungeon pieces), and *Hammerfast: A Dwarven Outpost Adventure Site* (a fully detailed, ready-to-use dwarven town built atop the ruins of an ancient necropolis). I'm already using each of these in my ongoing campaigns.

This Month in the Real World

Our newest Organized Play program, Dungeons & Dragons® Encounters, starts on March 17. Check the retailor locator to see if your FLGS has signed up for this amazing in-store play program. If not, persuade them to sign up now! Each week for the entire season, head to your store to play in the next installment of the Undermountain campaign. Once the program begins, be sure to follow what's happening every Wednesday night on Twitter. This is just the beginning of a great new collaboration between Organized Play and R&D to bring you the best D&D experiences ever. I'll talk more about this in the months ahead.

Speaking of special events, Worldwide D&D Game Day takes place on March 20. This time around, the event focuses on *Player's Handbook* 3. Check out the D&D Events page for more details, and go to the retailer locator to find a location near you that's participating in the event.

If you show up at PAX East, look for us. We have a booth and a lot of fun things in store for players of all levels.

We Are Monster, Hear Us Roar!

We're about to debut our newly formatted monster stat block. The first place you'll see the new format is in the new adventure HS1: *The Slaying Stone* (on sale in May). Here are a few samples from that adventure. You can see that we've reorganized the information to make it easier to use and so that you can immediately find the details you need to run the monsters. This format goes into widespread use with the release of *Monster Manual* 3 in June.

Kobold Dragonshield	**Level 2 Soldier**
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 125
HP 36; **Bloodied** 18	**Initiative** +4
AC 18, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 13	**Perception** +2
Speed 5	Darkvision
Resist 5 acid	
Traits	
Mob Attack	
The kobold gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls per kobold ally adjacent to its target.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ **Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the kobold's next turn.	
Minor Actions	
Shifty ✦ **At-Will**	
The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Triggered Actions	
Dragonshield Tactics ✦ **At-Will**	
Trigger: An adjacent enemy shifts away from or an enemy moves adjacent to the kobold.	
Effect (Immediate Reaction): The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Skills Acrobatics +5, Stealth +7, Thievery +7	
Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 13 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+2)	
Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 10 (+1)	
Alignment evil **Languages** Common, Draconic	
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, short sword	

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Ankheg	**Level 3 Elite Lurker**
Large natural beast	XP 300
HP 100; **Bloodied** 50	**Initiative** +10
AC 17, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 14	**Perception** +9
Speed 8, burrow 4 (tunneling)	Tremorsense 5
Resist 5 acid	
Saving Throws +2; **Action Points** 1	

Traits

Mandible Carry

The ankheg can move at normal speed while grabbing a creature that is Medium or smaller.

Standard Actions

Claw ✦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage.

Mandible Grab ✦ At-Will

Requirement: The ankheg cannot be grabbing a creature.

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed.

Acid Spray (acid) **✦ Recharge** when first bloodied

Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in blast); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + 5 acid damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both).

Minor Actions

Gnaw and Scuttle (acid) **✦ At-Will** (1/round)

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the ankheg); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 2 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends). The ankheg then shifts 2 squares and pulls the target to a square adjacent to its new location.

Skills Stealth +11

Str 15 (+3)	**Dex** 20 (+6)	**Wis** 16 (+4)
Con 18 (+5)	**Int** 2 (-3)	**Cha** 4 (-2)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** –

Gray Ooze	**Level 2 Skirmisher**
Small natural beast (blind, ooze)	XP 125
HP 43; **Bloodied** 21	**Initiative** +5
AC 15, **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 13	**Perception** +2
Speed 5, climb 3	Blind, blindsight 10, tremorsense 10
Immune blinded, gaze; **Resist** 5 acid	

Traits

Ooze

While squeezing, the ooze moves at full speed rather than half speed, it doesn't take the -5 penalty to attack rolls, and it doesn't grant combat advantage for squeezing.

Standard Actions

Bone Melt (acid) **✦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d6 + 5 acid damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to Fortitude (save ends). The penalty to Fortitude is cumulative with multiple *bone melt* attacks.

Minor Actions

Slimy ✦ At-Will

Effect: The ooze shifts 2 squares.

Skills Stealth +12

Str 11 (+1)	**Dex** 15 (+3)	**Wis** 11 (+1)
Con 19 (+5)	**Int** 1 (-4)	**Cha** 1 (-4)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** –

E-Books

Did you know that many of our novels are now available as e-books that you can download onto your favorite reading device? We're adding more of our huge list of titles all the time. Check here for more information on this topic.

Front List in 2011

As I discussed last month, the Essentials line of products consists of 10 key products that will always be in stock and will form the core of the Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game experience moving forward. Each product is designed to provide a more streamlined, more directed, and less expensive experience for the user. These products don't replace the existing *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, or *Monster Manual*. They represent a separate pathway into the game. These 10 key products come out throughout the months of September, October, November, and December.

In January, 2011, our new front list products begin rolling out, providing expanded game options and materials for all players. We're going to continue to use the lessons we learned from Essentials while applying the innovation and design we're known for. You'll see options for players that include new power sources, new class and race options, and even more universal options that work with the material you're already playing with. For Dungeon Masters, options will include new campaign elements, new monsters, new tools to help plan and run the game, and more. These products will include our traditional formats, but you'll also see new formats as well. There's exciting things coming for D&D, and we'll get more and more into this topic as the year progresses.

Until next time, keep on playing!